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AMERICAN EXPLORATION AND TRAVEL

Tixier's Travels

On the Osage Prairies



DRAWN FROM LIFE BY VICTOR TIXIER

Majakita

Head Chief of the Osage

TIXIER'S *Travels*
on the Osage Prairies

EDITED BY
JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
ALBERT J. SALVAN



University of Oklahoma Press
NORMAN, 1940

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SET UP AND PRINTED AT NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, U.S.A.
BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS
PUBLISHING DIVISION OF THE
UNIVERSITY

First Edition, 1940

TO
M. CHARLES TIXIER

PREFACE

VICTOR TIXIER'S *Voyage aux prairies osages, Louisiane et Missouri, 1839-40* was originally published at Clermont-Ferrand, in 1844, apparently in a small edition, for it has remained one of the rarest pieces of western Americana. It is here offered in translation for the first time.

Of the illustrations in the present volume, five are by Tixier himself: the head of Majakita formed the frontispiece of his volume; the heads of Ouichinghêh, Pleureuse, Young Girl, and Wife of the Head Chief of the Kansa; the group of Osage warriors; the Charcoal Dance; and the Osage Air were included as four plates at the close of his book. The picture of Victor Tixier is from a portrait painted by Thomas Couture about 1837. That of Trudeau in Indian costume was painted by John Woodhouse Audubon in January or February, 1841.

The translator and the editor wish to express their indebtedness to the Missouri Historical Society of Saint Louis for furnishing the working copy used for translation and the pictures of Trudeau and Papin; and to Miss Stella M. Drumm, Librarian, and Mrs. Nettie H. Beauregard, Archivist, for many kindnesses and suggestions. They also wish to acknowledge the assistance of the National Youth Administration and Washington University in supplying a typist, as well as many courtesies from the Washington University Library, the Mercantile Library of Saint Louis, the Washington University Medical School Library, and particularly the Library of the Department of Geology at Washington University. To Mrs. Wayne C. Willis they also extend their thanks. Dr. J. B. Trudeau of Saranac and Dr. Archibald Malloch of New York have been kind enough to supply much information about James Trudeau. The Chief Li-

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brarian of Clermont-Ferrand and the Mayor of Saint Pont, Allier, France, were of very considerable service.

Most of all, however, the translator and the editor feel indebted to M. Charles Tixier, son of the author, for his many kindnesses in sending a map, drawings, information about his father, and the picture of him. Without his assistance they could have said little about the man who wrote the book.

JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT

ALBERT J. SALVAN

Saint Louis, February 1, 1940

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Tixer's Travels
On the Osage Prairies

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE Near Southwest—that country stretching out from Missouri through the Arkansas Valley—for many decades was a well known but little frequented region. At first the wildness of the country, the distance from settled parts, and the hostility of the Indians, later the reservations set up by the United States, limited the white population to a small military force, a few missionaries, and traders. But these very conditions resulted in a considerable body of literature, for the few who came were curious, observant, and given to self-expression.

In the late seventeenth century, La Salle pushed down into the Illinois country and the Spanish reestablished themselves at Santa Fe. Between them lay an immense stretch of territory—and the Osage. The history of the region might well be written as a history of these Indians. The French with Du Tisné and Bourgmont pushed up the Missouri River to the west, and at more than one struggle in the eastern reaches of America Osage warriors fought for the French. The Spaniards came over the plains to drive out the French and were themselves destroyed by the Indians. Throughout the century we may read of adventurous French and Spaniards in small parties, making their way across the great valleys of the Missouri and the Arkansas to far distant places, until at last a successful passage from Santa Fe to Saint Louis was made in the 1790's. Throughout the century, moreover, the Osage dominated the country that lay southwest from Saint Louis.

With the Louisiana Purchase came several changes. The westward surge of population led to an insistence greater than ever before that the Osage be restrained in their often unpleasant activities. The desire of the Federal Government to learn

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something of its new lands, the possibilities of trade, and general curiosity led to many an official or private exploring tour. From the military outposts, for example, went such expeditions as those of Pike and Wilkinson in 1806, of George Sibley, the government factor at Fort Clark, to the Salines of the Osage in 1811; the carefully organized scientific tour under Long in 1819 and 1820; and the military reconnaissance of Leavenworth and Dodge with the recently organized dragoons in 1834. Independent and more or less solitary tours like those of Nuttall and of Schoolcraft were scientific in motive, but were excellent in adding to the knowledge of the country, even though they went only to the edges of that Near Southwest. Merchants have supplied us with more data than have scientists in that region. Jules de Mun, on his trading journey with Auguste Pierre Chouteau in 1815 to the headwaters of the Arkansas, kept a detailed account of the country he was seeing for the first time. Thomas James, in the latter part of his life, wrote of his adventures as a merchant on the Santa Fe trail in the early 1820's. Jacob Fowler about the same time set down a valuable account of his travels from Fort Smith to the Rockies. And above all others Josiah Gregg has preserved much of the history and topography of this widespread region. Still another class—and this a more conscious literary group—recorded impressions and observations of the Southwest. They ranged in literary taste and ability from the thoughtful Louis Cortambert inspecting a new world, to the plain-writing but observant and understanding Charles Joseph Latrobe, to the whimsical and picturesque and quaint Washington Irving.

In all of these accounts—whether military, topographical, mercantile, scientific, or merely curious—the Osage play a considerable part, but in none does the face of the country or the customs and manners of that tribe enjoy such an important place as in Victor Tixier's *Voyage aux prairies osages*, which re-

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cords the experiences of several months spent with the Osage in their villages and on their summer hunt in 1840. Tixier not merely offers a full picture of the Osage in that year, which we would lack otherwise, but he gives us also a view of country that was not covered by Pike or Sibley, by Long or the Dragoon Expedition, by Irving or Latrobe or Cortambert. Above all, he presents an account of the life of this tribe not to be equalled by any other of the many travel-writers of the Southwest. Eventually Spanish official records, United States military and Indian Office papers, and missionary letters and journals, added to other documents and printed sources, will make possible excellent and thorough histories of the Southwest and of the Osage. Tixer's account of that tribe in 1840, however, must remain one of the most important sources for the historian to draw upon.

II

Few travelers in the Mississippi Valley a century ago left as detailed and valuable an account of western adventure as that of Victor Tixer; yet none in such a recital of personal experience succeeded in telling his readers less about himself than that young Frenchman did. On the first page of his *Voyage aux prairies osages* one finds that he had a mother and a sister, but he gave them no names. He was leaving France for the first time, but he did not refer to his place of birth or his residence. He was traveling with a schoolmate, but did not mention his school or the name of his friend. He had a genius for omitting personal detail. Apparently it was only romantic curiosity that sent this quite young man to America, for he made no statement of his reasons for going. Such paucity of detail arose obviously from his lack of interest in himself and from his great interest in what he saw; and the reading of the greater part of

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the book could lead one to believe that he wished to remain the unknown author. So carefully has this strict and modest editorial point of view been maintained that one even suspects "Victor Tixier" to be a pseudonym. These assumptions, happily, are not true: inadvertently M. Tixier permitted himself to be discovered.

In a few scattered passages there is evidence that the author was a doctor, or at least a student of medicine. While visiting at the Sauvé plantation in Louisiana, he examined a Negro slave whose skull had been broken and cheek badly wounded in an accident. "I followed the mode of treatment," he wrote, "which I had so often seen applied by my good and scholarly master, Professor Sanson," and very good success had the disciple of that noted Parisian surgeon, who was to die not long after Tixier returned home. About this time, too, the young Frenchman treated another Negro injured by a bursting gun and expressed some curiosity about Chickasaw ideas of medicine. Later, when he was with the Osage in the west, he observed with some care conditions of disease and medical practice among those Indians. On the hunt he had occasion to treat the wife of Majakita, the Head Chief. When that illustrious personage fell from his horse and broke his collar bone, Tixier, "with his colleague," was sent for by "his Osage highness" and applied a "dressing made of bands of colors." The patient, however, found the bandage irksome and no warning of accidents could prevail upon him to bear it. Tixier had similar experience with the mother of a child whose arm he set. His prize patient on this non-professional tour was a young woman who had been bitten by a rattlesnake. So interested was he in this, to him, unusual case that he gave four pages of his narrative to the description of the wound, his treatment of it, the opposition of the Osage medicine men, and their final acknowledgment of his success. "This cure," he seemed pleased to write, "brought me

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the title of *Ouakantaku-chinka*—“the Little Medicine Man.” He published an account of the affair in the *Gazette des hôpitaux*, April 6, 1841, and no doubt repeated there the scientific reasons for the failure of the bite to prove fatal.

The discovery that Tixier was a physician or a surgeon suggested to a despairing editor in search of his author an avenue of investigation that proved a mere *cul-de-sac*: the failure of the usual bibliographic aids to supply data was matched by the omissions of available medical dictionaries and biographical works. Two other bits of information, however, led to the discovery of the author. Mme. Bayle-Mouillard, who gave to him on sailing a copy of her latest book, was evidently a friend and apparently a resident of Clermont-Ferrand. Tixier published his *Voyage* in that town. A letter addressed to the Bibliothèque Municipale of that place brought excellent results.¹

Victor Tixier was born in Clermont-Ferrand March 24, 1815. He studied medicine in Paris and passed his examinations “with outstanding success.” While in Paris he associated freely with artists, and about 1837 the well known painter, Thomas Couture, did a portrait of him. When he was to enter the Saint Louis Hospital in Paris as an interne in surgery, he suffered the accident that led to the travels in America. While dissecting, he pricked his left ring finger, and, the wound not healing, he went to his mother’s home at Saint Pont for the sake of the country air. Attempts to resume his studies were repeatedly in-

¹Mr. Salvan’s letter to the Chief Librarian obtained for us information about the later scientific activities and publications of Tixier, but that official happily suggested also that Mr. Salvan write to the Mayor of Saint Pont, Allier, for information about the family. The latter turned the letter he received over to M. Charles Tixier, the son of Victor, and to him we are indebted for many kindnesses.

All information in this introduction concerning Tixier’s life in France is drawn from the following letters: Le Bibliothécaire-en-chef, Bibliothèque Municipale et Universitaire, Clermont-Ferrand, to Albert J. Salvan, 19 avril 1937; Charles Tixier, Saint Pont, Allier, to Albert J. Salvan, 30 mai 1937; Charles Tixier, Saint Pont, Allier, to Albert J. Salvan, 6 août 1937; Charles Tixier, Saint Pont, Allier, to John Francis McDermott, 25 avril 1938.

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terrupted by fever. For the sake of diversion he determined on a voyage to America. At the suggestion of his friend, James Trudeau, he sailed from Le Havre on November 23, 1839, but instead of returning to France within a couple of months he remained nearly a year in America.

On his return to France Victor Tixier must have finished whatever part of his medical training that yet remained, for early in the 1840's he settled in Saint Pont where he practised medicine free. Much of his attention, however, was given to a study of the dialects about him, an interest foreshadowed by his many comments on the variations in French that he found among the Creoles of Louisiana and Missouri. He took advantage of his visits to the farmers of Allier, we are told, to study and write down their primitive language and to make extensive comparison of the words of this dialect with the standard usage. Three or four papers on this subject, the most important of which was a glossary of the dialect of Escurolles, were published by the Société d'émulation du Bourbonnais, of which he was a member. He belonged also to a number of other scientific organizations, including the Académie de Clermont, the Société des sciences médicales de Gannat, and the Institut des Provinces de France. In addition to his scholarly papers he wrote a number of tales in dialect that appeared first in the *Journal de Gannat* and were reprinted in book form in 1871. Other writings which show the variety of his subjects were studies entitled, *Le mariage dans le canton d'Escurolles* and *Vestiges de l'Epoque romane: langue et peinture*. He took pleasure in excavation. M. Charles Tixier informs us that he often dug with his father among the Gallo-Roman tombs of their district. It is readily seen, then, that the anthropological, philological, and sporting interests so well illustrated by his American travel record were always characteristic of this man.

Victor Tixier died July 16, 1885.

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III

Of the three companions of Tixier, two cannot be identified. One was A. Guérin who without doubt was the fellow passenger of the *Republican* with whom Tixier made his excursion to Lake Pontchartrain, for aboard the *General Pratte* Tixier referred to him in such terms. This man of moderate corpulence the Osage named "the Big Frenchman." Apparently he was a good deal with the author and Trudeau in Louisiana as well as on the Osage trip, but, except for some casual references to incidents in the travels, we learn nothing of the man. M. Charles Tixier informs us, however, that he was Alexandre Guérin of Bordeaux. The other unknown appears in the narrative for the first time when the party started up the Mississippi: here he was described as "a young Frenchman who was going to Canada" with James. Later we find that the Osage called him "the Long Frenchman" because of his height; at the same time Tixier gave his name as Foureau.

The identity of the third of these fellow travelers, however, can be definitely established. In the first sentence of the narrative he was described by the author as a "camarade d'études" who was returning to Louisiana. No other specific mention was made of him for many pages but (as it will become clear presently) the "we" who left New Orleans early in February, 1840, to go up to Acadia (that is, the Acadian Coast) must have been Tixier and this schoolmate. The next actual reference is in the account of a hunt during which, we are told, "James ... killed three" alligators. In the fourth chapter James was named as one of the passengers on the *General Pratte*; the ultimate aim of his leisurely movements was either Canada or New York. It is so that the narrative runs. James was evidently the chief and most intimate friend of the author—so much so that Tixier never mentioned his last name. We learn that James was called

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"the Tall Frenchman" by the Osage, that he shot a buffalo with a pistol, that on one occasion he rode out with an Osage war party. We may add together many scenes in which he participated, but we are never told who he was. Two facts, nevertheless, become reasonably clear even though we must splice passages: James was a Louisianian and a fellow doctor. Though he is not named in any of the "medical" passages of the story, except in such a general phrase as "my colleague," though his name only appears in other places in the book, there can be little doubt from the whole context that this intimate friend of the author was the James so freely mentioned in the narrative.

All of this might remain amiable conjecture were it not for one passage in which Tixier gives a satisfactory clue to the identity of his companion. While they were at the Osage villages on the Neosho, he tells us, "I went to sit with James at the fire of old White Hair He told my companion how he had known his grandfather, the Governor of Saint Louis, and told him how glad he was to see the grandson of his old friend." Among the commandants at Saint Louis only Zenon Trudeau, who was Lieutenant-Governor of the Illinois country from 1792 to 1799, had a grandson named James.

James De Berty Trudeau, the eldest son of René Trudeau and Adèle Sauvé, was born in Louisiana (probably in Jefferson Parish) September 14, 1817.² He was educated in Europe, first at the College of Louis-le-Grand in Paris and later (because of ill-health) at a military school in Switzerland. Possibly he began the study of medicine in Paris. We know, however, that he was studying medicine under Dr. Joseph Pancoast in Philadel-

² The principal sources for the life of Trudeau are: E. L. Trudeau, *An Autobiography*, 8-13; Lawrason Brown, "Trudeau's Family Tree," *Journal of the Outdoor Life*, October and November, 1934, not paged; Arthur and Kernion, *Old Families of Louisiana*, 92-97; Archibald Malloch, "James De Berty Trudeau: Artist, Soldier, Physician," *Bulletin*, New York Academy of Medicine, Second Series, II (December, 1935), 681-99.

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phia and that he received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in March, 1837. During 1836 and 1837 he showed much interest in the collection of birds, varieties of which he sometimes shared with his friend John James Audubon. In the fall of 1838 he was once more in Paris, and probably remained there until November, 1839, for M. Charles Tixier says that the *voyage to America* was made largely at the urging of Victor's friend, Trudeau (apparently their acquaintance had begun at a time when they were studying medicine together).

Family tradition has it that James accompanied Audubon when the latter went with Frémont on an expedition to the Rockies in 1841 or 1842. Audubon, however, did not go west with Frémont, but made his own separate trip up the Missouri in 1843. James traveled with neither. Apparently the basis for the tradition was the excursion that he made with Tixier in 1840, and on this occasion he lived among the Osage for two months, not two years. The Indian costume in which John Woodhouse Audubon painted him later must have been presented to him on this trip.

Trudeau settled down to the practice of medicine in New York. In 1843 he married Cephise Berger, daughter of Dr. François Eloi Berger of that city. Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau of Saranac was the third child of this marriage. Presently Dr. Trudeau and his wife were divorced and he married secondly Louise Bringier of St. James Parish, Louisiana. In New York Trudeau became one of the founders of the New York Academy of Medicine, which was organized in 1847. Perhaps his success in medical practice was injured (or, at least, his popularity with his fellow practitioners somewhat lessened) by a characteristic expression of his spirit. That he had some skill with his pencil and with water colors, we know from his contacts with Audubon. But he was also something of a sculptor. Between

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1849 and 1858 he made a series of satiric statuettes of his medical colleagues and, if one is to judge from photographs, the caricatures were remarkably well done.

In 1852 Trudeau sold his medical library, but he was still living in New York in 1858, for the last of the statuettes is dated in that year. In 1860 the publication of an article in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* indicates that he had returned to the South. During the Civil War he was at first in command of the Louisiana Legion at New Orleans and later was made Brigadier General of Artillery in the Confederate Army. He was wounded at Shiloh and was engaged in the defense of Island No. 10. After the war he lived in New Orleans, practised medicine, and edited a medical review there. He died in that city May 25, 1887.

IV

After a stormy but uneventful voyage, the American three-master *Republican* arrived at New Orleans on January 27, 1840. To Victor Tixier, whose chief amusements had been meditating upon Mme. Bayle-Mouillard's ideas of religion and social progress and listening to the yodeling of German emigrant passengers, the most satisfying part of this nine-weeks passage was the last leg from the Balise to New Orleans. His romantic imagination at last had something to feed upon. At dusk one evening the ship came to the mouth of the great river for which Tixier could see no banks. If this was disappointment, certainly it was an unusual one. The next morning new and amazing sights were before him. A young and eager Frenchman could find enough adventure, enough novelty in the Mississippi Valley a century ago, and we are happy that he put on paper his observations, naïve and eager, sharp and understanding.

Tixier's book is unusually valuable today, principally be-

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cause it gives us a wealth of detail concerning subjects of which other travelers wrote little. To the crossing he gave only a few pages, but for the hundred-mile tow up the Mississippi to the port of New Orleans we have an amount of description equalled only by the writings of the English scientist, Lyell, a few years later. Tixier was primarily interested in modes of life. The cities, therefore, were to him but French towns. He stayed five days in New Orleans on landing; he returned twice to that city. But he allowed it only a handful of paragraphs, and part even of this space was allotted to the reporting of a side trip to Lake Pontchartrain. He was three days in Saint Louis before going out to the Osage country and a couple of weeks there on his return, but that town has only a page or two in his narrative. We have many descriptions of both of these cities and can easily forego one more. Tixier has earned his important place in the literature of the South and West because he devoted his book to accounts of plantation life in Louisiana and Indian life in Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma far more detailed than any else we have for this period.

It was Trudeau, of course, who furnished the entrée into the homes of the leading families of Louisiana. Five days after landing, Tixier, with James, went up the river to the plantation of Robin de Logny, an uncle of his companion, and there they remained about two weeks. On the very night of their arrival Logny entertained them with a woodcock hunt by torchlight. The next day Tixier inspected the slave quarters and the conditions under which the blacks worked. At the infirmary some Negroes performed the Carancro dance for him. He was taken to visit neighboring families. The cane fields, the crawfish, the cypress forests, and always the river were subjects of fascination to the Frenchman.

On the return trip to New Orleans they stopped at the residence of Pierre Sauvé who was also an uncle of Trudeau. Here

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Tixier found a small settlement of Choctaw Indians whose language, medical and religious ideas, history, and personalities won extended comment. Edouard Guiot, who had a plantation near the city, entertained Tixier with a stag hunt in the cypress forest. M. Charles Tixier has informed us that his father "was a very good sharpshooter" and that he was always fond of hunting. Certainly throughout the record of his travels we find many a page devoted to sport of this sort. While he was in New Orleans, the river broke through the levees and he had the opportunity to inspect a crevasse a few miles above the Sauvé estate. Another expedition below the city was arranged to give him an opportunity to hunt alligators in the bayous. Rattlesnakes, kingsnakes, congos, bullfrogs, flowers—all excited his interest, and, though he occasionally made such a mis-statement as to say that rattlers were sometimes eighteen feet long, most of his observations are sound and excellently detailed.

After three months in Louisiana he thought of going home. "I had planned to return to France," he tells us, "with a fellow passenger of the *Republican*, M. A. Guérin. James and a young Frenchman, who was going to Canada, were to take the same route as ours as far as New York." They expected to spend a few days in Saint Louis; visit "one or two redskin nations, then sail up the Illinois River to Peoria, go to Chicago to sail across the Great Lakes, and, after admiring the Niagara Falls, go down to Albany and New York on the Hudson."

They left New Orleans in May on the steamboat *General Pratte*. On board was Major Paul Liguest Chouteau to whom they had been well recommended. He talked so fascinatingly about the Osage country that Tixier and his friends changed their itinerary. Chouteau would give them an introduction to the chiefs; the travelers might join the Indians on their summer hunt. "I accepted the Major's suggestion immediately; it allowed me to realize my greatest desire," Tixier wrote. "I was

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going to live among the redskins in the manner of the redskins!
... To live like a nomadic savage for almost three months!"

But before the enthusiastic young men could set out upon the hunt they must reach Saint Louis; on the passage up the river Tixier found plenty to interest him. He talked much with Creole ladies among the passengers. They passed Natchez not many hours before it was devastated by a tornado. For a stretch the *General Pratte* raced with the *Ohio Belle*. All the thrills and pleasures of the river were his.

At Saint Louis Tixier met Edward Chouteau, the son of the Major, but, more exciting still, he met some Osage Indians, among whom was one of those who had been in Paris a decade earlier. The party traveled by steamboat to Lexington, proceeded overland to Independence and Westport to obtain horses, and then pushed on to Harrisonville over the ever fascinating prairie. Tixier missed nothing. His account is rich in detail of the frontier towns and outlying farms as well as of animal and bird life. They arrived at the ruins of the abandoned Harmony Mission; they passed a night at the farm of George Douglas. At last they reached their first objective, the Osage village Tixier called Nion-Chou, where Pierre Melicourt Papin lived as resident agent for the American Fur Company.

Tixier was full of questions, overflowing with lively interest. The trading establishment, the Indian village, the history, manners, costumes, and language of the tribe, won a long chapter in his narrative. When the tribe, with Papin and the travelers, set out on the hunt, Tixier had ample opportunity to observe all their hunting customs, their games, civil code, war customs. The buffalo hunt and the butchering and curing of the meat, of course, are described in detail. The Kansa, the Pawnee, and the then little known Comanche are presented with much curious and authentic lore. The whole country along the present border between Kansas and Oklahoma and the famous salines of the

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Osage are interestingly described. In fact, there is hardly a subject concerned with the Osage Indian and the Southwest which did not come under the careful observation or shrewd inquiry of Victor Tixier before he returned to Saint Louis late in August.

Once Tixier is in Saint Louis, the narrative comes swiftly to a close. A page suffices to tell us how he was cured of the sickness that overcame him on the way down from Edward Chouteau's farm, how he took passage on a steamboat for Pittsburgh, went over the mountains to New York, sailed from that city on September 25, and reached home thirty days later. With a sure understanding of values, Tixier knew that his book was finished when he left the Indian country, but it was a book worth writing, and with respect to that the text is well able to speak for itself.

Part I: Louisiana

I. THE CROSSING

IDEPARTED with a schoolmate¹ of mine who was returning to Louisiana on the *Republican*, a fine American three-master whose reputation and graceful shape had fascinated us. The boring formalities of the customs gone through, we sailed on November 23, 1839. The sailors at the capstan hoisted the yard of the main topsail singing their well known chanty.²

The cables were pulled on board; we crossed the bar; one by one, the sails were trimmed, then they filled with the sharp nor'easter which keeled the vessel to port, but we were soon brought to; the police gave us back our passports, called the roll of the steerage passengers, and climbed down into a bark which took them back to Havre with the pilot. The *Republican* resumed its course; we were off.

Good-bye France, good-bye mother and sister, good-bye friends waving from afar whose faces we can no longer recognize; again good-bye my country; we are at sea.

I am giving up these precious gifts without feeling anything but confused regrets. A superficial emotion stifles that deep sadness which a first departure should cause. I think only of this long trip which is beginning; of the rich, powerful life I am going to contemplate; and I forget for a while my poor mother who is now crying for me. Oh! why am I going so far to seek new terrible thrills, to find death perhaps, when I was so happy under the maternal roof? Why does man cheerfully give up his

¹ The identity of this *camarade d'études* cannot be determined. It may have been James de Berty Trudeau of Louisiana or possibly A. Guérin. Concerning them see Editor's Introduction.

² At the end of the first paragraph of the original, in parentheses and in italics, appear the words, "oh! cherlymen!" We have not found any chanty with a burden similar to this. Compare the interesting account of the sailors' singing *Sally Brown* in the opening chapter of Captain Frederick Marryatt's *A Diary in America* (London, 1839), I, 39-43.

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home, his country, his friends, his mother, for an unknown, ungracious land, where men will show him nothing but indifference and coldness, where he will no longer find the inexhaustible help of friendship to comfort him? It is because the traveler sacrifices everything to craving for movement, instruction, and life; it is because he imagines what he has not seen is more beautiful and bigger than life; but in the bottom of his heart nothing will take the place of the country which has seen his birth and the mother who rocked him when he was a child.

But I give myself up to my destiny as a traveler. I look around and, seduced by novelty, I forget the land and admire the ship which at times plunges into a gulf and then rises to the top of a wave.

The land was receding, the Cape of La Hève, the mouth of the Seine were far already, and before us unrolled the circular horizon of a sea roughened by a sharp breeze and covered with white caps. Above our heads the terns were flying across the clear sky; but as we reached the open sea, the sea birds ceased to follow us in the greater distance and began to return toward the coast, the blue profile of which became thinner and paler while we sailed on. At nightfall before and behind the ship was the sea, the sea was everywhere with its eternal motion and the sky touched the waves. We were alone in that huge circle, the center of which seemed to be our ship.

The breeze turned to the southwest during the night and we tacked about the English Channel until December 5 before we entered the Atlantic Ocean. The wind kept southwest and we went along the coasts of France and Portugal. We passed the Azores, Teneriffe, the bank of Arguin so fatal to the *Medusa*.³ Finally, on January 12, 1840, forty days after our departure, we

³ The frigate *Medusa* was wrecked in 1816 on the bank of Arguin off the coast of Mauritania (French West Africa).

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found the trade winds, and the *Republican* headed toward America.

During that long period of hard navigation, the crossing was unfavorable. Sudden squalls and storms assailed us near the coast of Africa; we had two fires on board; a dangerous leak was found in the hold; one hundred and eighty French and German steerage passengers came near running out of food; finally a man fell overboard and was drowned. But these accidents which make such deep impression on a traveler are of no special interest. All log books are alike save for a few differences.

I had a book, only one, which made me forget the squalls and a raging ocean. Mme. Bayle-Mouillard had given me her work on religious conviction and social progress.⁴ On the sea, underneath this wide sky which makes one think of other worlds, one feels, even though he may be unable to understand, the greatness of the infinite. One feels that beyond this sky we can see, there are many more skies, as one knows that there are other seas beyond that horizon of waves which unrolls before your eyes. If, amidst this sublime sight, the soul is once more uplifted by sublime thoughts; if the maxims one has just read are not empty words or cold reasoning linked to one another; if they express a strong inward conviction, the fruits of which are noble actions, then one adopts Mme. Bayle's beliefs. Such

⁴ Elizabeth Canard (1796-1865) was the wife of J. B. Bayle-Mouillard (1800-1884), a magistrate and jurist. She wrote much under the pseudonym of Madame Celnart. The work to which Tixier here refers was *Du Progrès social et de la conviction religieuse* (Paris, Treuttel et Wurtz, 1840). The only edition listed in either Louandre and Bourquelot, *La Littérature française contemporaine* (II, 552-53) or in the Catalogue des auteurs of the Bibliothèque Nationale (IX, 152-59) is that of 1840. Possibly she supplied Tixier with an advance copy? Lorenz (I, 187) says that she published this work under her own name. It is interesting to note that her husband published books in Clermont-Ferrand in 1838 and 1841 and Madame Bayle-Mouillard in 1834, 1837, 1851. They were apparently townspeople and were possibly friends of the Tixier family.

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was the effect produced on me by that fine book whose elevated style, deep thought, and delicacy, can belong only to women with noble unselfish souls. I read these beautiful pages with delight, I who had not yet meditated those words: God, the Future.

In the trade wind regions, the calm nights of the tropics made the German steerage passengers gather on the front part of the ship; they yodeled together and sang songs of their country. This music, often delightful to hear, made the evenings pass in a charming fashion.

Our fine ship lightly ploughed the waves which splashed against her sides. She glided on the sea covered with a sheet of foam the whiter in contrast with the darkness. She raised millions of sparks, and seemed to leave a track of fire. A beautiful night on the ocean is sublime in that latitude. There is an impressive grandeur in the calm Atlantic, in its beautiful sky, scattered with stars a hundred times brighter than those in our countries; and when the moon rises red behind a veil of clouds, one thinks he sees at the horizon a large ship in flames; then, clearing the clouds, it casts a thousand diamonds over the waves. The sight of this natural world so fearful one day and so calm the next throws one into a reverie that he wishes could last forever.

Quickly the *Republican* crossed the Atlantic and soon the presence of birds announced the West Indies. On January 14, at about 3 P.M. a sailor on the lookout on the fore top gallant yard called "Land!" We briskly climbed up the main top and saw aport two high blue points which belonged to the Saint Martin and Antigua islands.⁵ We were in the lesser Antilles surrounded by a great many islands on which we might find help if need be.

⁵ So he names them, but he must mean Anguilla and St. Martin, the two islands at the northern end of the Lesser Antilles.

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The points, which we had seen separated at first, soon seemed to come near each other and looked like one; but other lands rose from the Ocean. We entered the Sombrero Pass,⁶ south of the Virgin Islands, the bare lands of which are lined by enormous rocky cliffs. A current whose speed was estimated at one mile an hour was in our favor and brought us between Saint Thomas and Santa Cruz.⁷ These two islands are very high but of quite different aspect. The former is gloomy and barren. Santa Cruz, richer and covered with trees and green, is a delightful sight. Small bays indent the coast and when we passed stood out dark against the golden green color given to the island by a magnificent sunset.

We saw a Danish man-o'-war which constantly cruises along the pass. Europe keeps numerous cruisers in those regions where a great many coves accessible only to small boats offer a safe shelter to the pirates formerly so numerous in the Caribbean seas. While we admired the beautiful sight a breeze from the n.w. unexpectedly reached us. It was all in our favor; it filled our sails, and we followed its course for some time on a beautiful calm sea.

Puerto Rico was in front of us.⁸ A white mist which arose after the squall and remained until the next day did not allow us to see the land distinctly. We only saw the island crowned all along its length with high hills. I sighed when we passed by the hills, the palm trees, and the tropical vegetation; but, our supplies being nearly exhausted, I kept hoping that the Captain would be forced to put into port at Cuba.

⁶ The *Atlas Universel* (Map No. 31) shows a *Pas de Sombrere* between Anguilla and St. Martin and the Virgin Islands. A Sombrero Isle lies to the northwest of Anguilla and the Virgin Islands directly west. Tixier's designation is not used on modern American maps.

⁷ Santa Cruz lies to the south of the main group of the Virgin Islands. Tixier's designation (*le Trou-de-la-Vierge*) does not appear on modern maps. The *Atlas Universel* (Map No. 31) gives the *Pas des Vierges* as between the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

⁸ The *Republican* passed to the south of Puerto Rico.

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On the seventeenth we were off Santo Domingo; the land was not yet visible. In the evening the high mountainous island showed on the horizon. The Captain unrolled his maps and, after pointing to us the route we had followed, told us that according to his estimate we were not far from the reef of La Vela, a dangerous rock of the Caribbean Sea.⁹ In fact at ten in the evening, the lookout man announced the presence of the rock. We were able to see by the moonlight nothing but a greyish mass against which the waves broke three miles away from us. The next morning we were off Port au Prince. Thick fogs prevented us from seeing the land.

On the nineteenth we saw ahead of us Morant-Kays and its mangroves. We sailed along Jamaica, with its crocodiles floating on the water.¹⁰

January 22, near the Cape of Saint Anthony,¹¹ at the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, a sail was seen which seemed at first to follow our tack, then headed toward us all sails set; it became larger rapidly and soon showed us its broadside which bristled with the muzzles of its guns. We could see another battery lined on its deck. The beautiful frigate came into our wake and contrary to custom on board warships hoisted its flag before we had shown ours. But the wind was blowing the large folds of its flag and at first we saw only its red color. Soon a whim of the breeze uncovered the flag of France. I could not express the happiness I felt then at the sight of our glorious colors floating on this beautiful ship so far from my country. The American stars hoisted to our mizzen-gaff did not let our compatriots know there were on board some French people happy to greet unknown friends from afar. The frigate passed behind us,

⁹ Off the southernmost extremity of Santo Domingo.

¹⁰ Southwest of Haiti and southeast of Jamaica. They were not really off Port au Prince, Haiti, for the long southwestern arm of the island lay between them. They passed to the south of Jamaica.

¹¹ The extreme western tip of Cuba.

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clewed up its royals, and resumed its course while lessening its speed. We entered the Gulf of Mexico and at 9 P.M. passed the Tropic of Cancer again.

This passage was greeted by a violent squall with thunder and lightning. The darkness was such that it was impossible to walk on deck without groping our way; at times flashes of lightning tore the sky, dazzling us for a while and plunging us again into a deeper darkness. The storm did not last a week as Captain Blunt had declared;¹² we did not notice the noise like the cracking of rifles which according to that author usually precedes squalls from the north in that season in the Gulf of Mexico.

The next day we were sailing close to the wind to hold our course, when we met a small Spanish three-master with its flag at half-mast, its top-gallant fore-mast broken, and navigating very poorly. We thought that it wanted to ask help, for the crew, crowding the deck, made frequent signals. When we were within speaking distance, the captain asked for the precise longitude, and then sailed away.

On January 25, the wind having changed to E. by N. we were on our course when we encountered logs drifting on the waves. Captain Wilson gave the order to clear the ship and to hoist the pole sails.

On leaving the dinner table I noticed to port a small schooner carrying a square pavillion at one of its masts. A few moments later a second sail increased in size and let us see two enormous brigantines and two stay-sails which seemed to come out of the sea. Hardly was it in full view when a quite different object appeared at the horizon: it was a white tower which looked as if it were built on the waves, for the lowlands are vis-

¹² Edmund March Blunt (1770-1862), an American hydrographer, published *The American Coast Pilot* (compiled by Captain Furlong) in 1796 and other volumes. His son, George William Blunt (1802-1878) was also an editor and publisher of nautical works. Consult the *Dictionary of American Biography*, II, 397-99.

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ible only when very close to them. It was the Balise Lighthouse and the southeast pass (the main pass) of the Mississippi.¹³ We tried in vain to discover the land.

The small ship came nearer, we hoisted the colors, a boat launched from the schooner came to us and an American pilot climbed on board.

He was not an ordinary pilot with the warm serviceable clothes of his profession, but a gentleman in a black suit, clean shaven, as serious looking as a judge listening complacently to his own speech, very pompous; in short, one of those men of whom I have met so many since, who, born into a very ordinary family, expect to conceal under the clothes of a gentleman a total lack of breeding and to replace good manners by an imper-turbable assurance.

Three tow-boats were in sight; but the tide was low; we could not enter the river that evening. We had to spend the night tacking before the passage.

Since the preceding day, I had noticed the sea appeared rather muddy, but that evening we tacked about across the wide yellowish muddy sheet of the Mississippi, the current of which shows far into the gulf and stands out against the green color of its water.¹⁴

The next day I understood why the shore could not be seen from afar.

¹³ Tixier in parentheses designated this the "Mainpass." Sir Charles Lyell (*A Second Visit to the United States of North America*, II, 119) declared that in 1846 the Southwest was the principal entrance.

¹⁴ "All the pilots agree, that when the Mississippi is at its height, it pours several streams of fresh water, tinged with yellow sediment, twelve miles or more into the gulf, beyond its mouths. These streams floating over the heavier salt water, spread out into broad superficial sheets or layers, which the keels of vessels plough through, turning up a furrow of clear blue water, forming a dark streak in the middle of the ship's wake." Lyell, *Second Visit*, II, 121.

II. THE MISSISSIPPI

BALISE—TOW-BOATS—THE PASS—APPEARANCE OF THE LAND—
THE BANKS OF THE RIVER—A RACE—VEGETATION—DWELLINGS—SNAGS—ENGLISH TURN—NEW ORLEANS

ON JANUARY 26, an hour before daybreak, we were all together on the deck. The tow-boats which had spent the night on the sea to tow us into the river had been getting up steam for a long time. At a great distance we heard the noise of the steam blowing out of their funnels, and could see the gleam of their lights. When dawn came, coloring the sky and the water a soft pink, the sea was beautiful and calm; myriads of birds left their shelters for the night and flew over the gulf. Twenty-two sails were in sight, waiting to enter the Mississippi.

The appearance of the land, which was quite close, then struck me with surprise. Instead of finding a definite difference of level between the sea and the shore, one saw a reddish strip level with the water like the edge of a pond. To the sadness of this flat, deserted shore the half-light added something vague and shapeless which gave the land the desolate appearance of a lagoon covered with reeds. This immense line of lowlands, torn by the waves, extended its long, jagged points far into the sea, and was preceded by archipelagoes of islets covered with yellow grass and piles of dead wood stuck in the mud.

The tow-boats noisily began to move and came to take the ships they were to bring to New Orleans. The *Lion* threw its cables on board and its powerful engine dragged us toward the river.

The route we followed was very difficult; often we had to navigate among obstacles which gradually increased in number.

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Masses of mud and trees packed together at the mouth of the river are carried away by the floods. Every year the delta grows toward the sea and little by little new land is formed, forcing back the water of the Gulf of Mexico. The traveler can watch the birth of that new land.

The settling of the muddy waters of the Meschacebe¹ is shown a great distance out by the higher bottom of the gulf. The closer one approaches the land the more clearly he can notice that rising. At first he can see above the sea level a few trunks of trees some distance apart; then they are found nearer to one another; a little farther inshore they are covered with a thin layer of earth; farther still, they form real islets where several high water plants grow. In the same way, huge strips of land are finally formed, and, as they increase by sedimentation, they reach the land, jagged with a number of small creeks, the depth of which diminishes every day.

The land itself is low, quite flat, and covered in this season with long yellow grass. There is no house as far as one can see, except on the banks of the river.

After passing through this almost inextricable labyrinth we reached the pass, through which we were towed without any accident. The *Lion*, leaving us on the river, returned to the gulf to bring back more ships.

The bar is formed by the settling of a considerable amount of mud which is never under more than sixteen or seventeen feet of water, even during the highest tides; and yet it is the deepest entrance to the river; therefore ships of huge tonnage cannot go to New Orleans. This natural obstacle, which Americans cannot destroy, will prevent the capital of Louisiana from ever becoming a naval station; on the other hand, it defends it

¹ For the origin of the word Mississippi and for variants of it, consult William A. Read, *Louisiana Place-Names of Indian Origin* (Baton Rouge, 1927), 39-40, and T. P. Thompson, "The Origin of the Various Names of the Mississippi River," *Publications of the Louisiana Historical Society*, IX (1917), 92-95.

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from attack by sea, for frigates and large ships cannot enter the river.

On the left bank of the southeast pass which we had just gone through, there stood among long grass Balise Light; on the right bank began endless plains covered with reed, where swarms of ducks, teals, pelicans, herons, white egrets, etc., were nesting.

The *Lion* had left us near a small creek, behind which is built the village of Balise,² composed only of a few small, very

² For the Balise, see Paul Alliot, *Historical and Political Reflections on Louisiana* [1803], 49-51, and Hutchins and Perrin du Lac as quoted in James A. Robertson's notes on Alliot in *Louisiana Under the Rule of Spain, France, and the United States* (Cleveland, 1911), I, 158-60. It will be interesting to quote in detail a source nearly contemporary with Tixier. Sir Charles Lyell, the English geologist, was in New Orleans and traveled in the Mississippi Valley early in 1846. From New Orleans he made a special trip to the mouths of the river:

"At length, as we approach the Balise, even these willows ceased to adorn the margin of the river, which was then simply bounded by mounds of bare sand. Balise means beacon in Spanish. It appears that, in 1744, the main passage or entrance of the river was at three small islands, which then existed where this pilot station now stands. It continued to be the principal mouth of the Mississippi for about a quarter of a century later. The present village, called the Balise, has a population of more than 450 souls, among whom there are fifty regularly appointed pilots, and many more who are aspirants to that office. The houses are built on piles driven into the mud-banks, and the greater part of them moored, like ships, to strong anchors, whenever a hurricane is apprehended. They have no fear of the river, which scarcely rises six inches during its greatest floods; but some winds make the Gulf rise six feet, as in the year 1812, and so fast has been the increase of population of late, that there are scarcely boats enough, as one of the pilots confessed to me, to save the people, should the waters rise again to that elevation. They might, however, escape on drift timber, which abounds here, provided they had time to choose the more buoyant trees; for we observed many large rafts of wood so water-logged that it could scarcely swim, and the slightest weight would sink it.

"Although the chimney of our steamer was not lofty, it stood higher than the houses; but in order to obtain a wider prospect, I went up into the look-out, a wooden frame-work with a platform, where the pilots were watching for vessels, with their telescopes. From this elevation, we saw, far to the south, the lighthouse, situated at what is now the principal entrance of the river. The pilots told us, that the old lighthouse, of solid brickwork, eighty-seven feet high, erected on 'the south point,' was destroyed by a hurricane in the winter of 1839. The keeper was saved although he was in the building for forty-eight hours before it fell, and, during the whole time, it vibrated frightfully to and fro. Much of the low banks, then bounding the river, were swept away, but have since been restored.

"To the eastward all was sea; turning to the north, or toward New Orleans and the delta, I could discover no more signs of the existence of a continent than when

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neat houses inhabited by Mississippi pilots. These men, who are all Americans, manage the piloting all over the Delta region. Severe and strictly enforced regulations assure them the very lucrative monopoly of the coast. They have their ship-yards,

looking southward or toward the lighthouse. In the west, Bird Island, covered with trees, was more conspicuous. An old pilot told us it was inhabited by large deer, and was 'very high land.' 'How high above the sea?' said I. 'Three or four feet,' he replied; and as if so startling an assertion required confirmation of several witnesses, he appealed to the bystanders, who assented, saying, 'It is all that, for it was only just covered during the great hurricane.' And well may such an elevation command respect in a town where all the foundations of the houses are under water, and where the value of each site is measured by the number of inches or feet within which a shoal rises to the surface of the sea.

"It was a curious sight to behold seventy or more dwellings, erected on piles, among reeds half as high as the houses, and which often grew close to them, most of the buildings communicating with an outhouse by a wooden bridge thrown over a swamp or pool of water, sometimes fresh and sometimes brackish. On one side of the main channel, which our steamer had entered, was built a long wooden platform, made of planks, resting on piles, which served for a promenade. There we saw the pilots' wives and daughters, and among them the belles of the place, well-dressed, and accompanied by their pet dogs, taking their evening walk.

* * * * *

"Dr. Carpenter had brought with him Charlevoix's maps of the river mouths or 'passes,' published 112 years ago, and referring to the state of things about 130 years ago. We were surprised to find how accurately this survey represents, for the most part, the number, shape, and form of the mud-banks and bayous, or channels, as they now exist around the Belize. The pilots, to whom we showed the charts, admitted that one might imagine them to have been constructed last year, were it not that bars had been thrown across the mouths of every bayou, because they are no longer scoured out as they used to be when the principal discharge of the Mississippi was at this point. We then went within a mile of the old Spanish building, called the Magazine, correctly laid down in Charlevoix's map, and now 600 yards nearer the sea than formerly, showing that the mud-banks have given way, or that the salt water has encroached in times when a smaller body of fresh water has been bringing down its sediment to this point.

"The southwest pass is now the principal entrance of the Mississippi, and till lately there was eighteen feet of water in it, but the channel has grown shallower by two feet. When it is considered that a fleet of the largest men-of-war could sail for a thousand miles into the interior, were it not for the bars thrown across the entrance of each of the mouths or passes, one can not wonder that efforts should have been made to deepen the main channel artificially. But no human undertaking seems more hopeless; for, after a great expenditure of money, in 1838 and 1839, and the excavation, by means of powerful steam dredges, of a deep passage, the river filled up the entire cavity with mud during a single flood.

"One of the chief pilots told us, that since 1839, or in six years, he had seen an advance of the prominent mouths of the river of more than a mile. But Linton, the oldest and most experienced of them, admitted that the three passes called the north-

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their sheers which can be seen back in the creek, with some schooners and old hulks out of use.

A yawl manned by four came to take the pilot ashore. Among the oarsmen was a Creole bred of a Negress and an Indian.³ His hair was black, long and curly, his beard was thin, his forehead high and narrow, his deep-set eyes black and bright, his nose long and large with wide nostrils, his lips prominent, his chin flat, his skin very black and shiny.

In exchange for the pilot, we took on board a young Creole who jumped on the deck, his cigar in his mouth. He spoke fast, now in French, now in English; he knew the Captain, the Boatswain and several passengers, and soon treated us as old acquaintances. He described himself as a lawyer's clerk in charge

east, southeast, and southwest, had in the last twenty-four years only advanced one mile each. Even this fact would furnish no ground for estimating the general rate at which the delta advances, for on each of these narrow strips of land, or river-banks, the sea would make extensive inroads whenever the main channel of discharge is altered and there is a local relaxation of the river's power. Every year, as soon as the flood season is over, the tide enters far up each channel, scouring out mud and sand, and sweeping away many a bar, formed during the period of inundation. Bringier, an experienced surveyor of New Orleans, told me, that on revisiting the mouths of the Mississippi after an interval of forty years, he was surprised to observe how stationary their leading features had remained. Dr. Dunbar, also an engineer in great practice in Louisiana, assured me that on comparing the soundings lately made by him with those laid down in the French maps of Sieur Diron, published in 1740, he found the changes to be quite inconsiderable. On questioning the pilots on the subject, they stated that the changes from year to year are great, but are no measure whatever of those worked out in a long period, for there seems to be a tendency in the action of the tides and river to restore the old soundings.

"Captain Grahame, also a government surveyor, on comparing the northeast pass with the charts made a century before, found it had not advanced more than a quarter of a mile, and that in the same interval the principal variations at the Passe à Loutre had consisted in the filling up of some bayous. Even if we could assume that the progress of the whole delta in twenty-five years was as great as that assigned by Linton to one or two narrow channels and banks, it would have taken several thousand years for the river to advance from New Orleans to the Belize; but when we take into our account the whole breadth of the delta, or that part of it which has advanced beyond the general coast-line above 100 miles across, we must allow an enormous period of time for its accumulation." Lyell, *A Second Visit*, II, 116-17, 119-20.

³ The term *Creole* is to be used only for persons of pure white blood, generally of French or Spanish descent. A person of mixed Indian and Negro blood was sometimes called a *sambo*, sometimes a *griffe* or *griffin*.

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of the custom-house in New Orleans and offered to give us for a piastre and a half a customs permit of entry which, according to him, would save us many of the tiresome formalities that were required by the customs in all civilized countries. I may say immediately that our entry permit was quite useless and spared us none of the troubles we wanted to avoid.

The *Lion* brought back in two trips a three-master from Boston and a Spanish brig from Havana. Its load was full, the two three-masters were hitched to its sides and the brig was to be towed behind by a double cable. We left.

Deafened at first by the noise of the steam and tired by lack of motion, I almost got land sickness. But, soon accustomed to both, I went on board the tow-boat, whose unusual shape had surprised me. The powerful Mississippi tow-boats look like floating houses. Above the boat there are two decks; on the upper one are the sailors' staterooms. This deck, shorter than the lower, leaves a wide platform at the front, in the middle of which, between the funnels, is a glassed-in cabin where the pilot and the helm are. As on all the Mississippi steamboats, the pilot steers from the front by means of ropes running along the sides of the boat which transmit the motion to the rudder. These ropes, according to specific regulations, should be replaced by chains, which in case of fire would let the boat in flames be steered to safety; however, out of the enormous number of boats plying on the river not even ten could be found conforming to this regulation. There are a thousand cases of such violation of the law in the nation which claims to have the most profound respect for the laws which have been adopted.⁴

After visiting the *Lion*, I climbed up the top gallant yard of the *Republican* to look out over the surrounding country. I

⁴ A police regulation suppressed the game of nine pins; the very next day a pin was added; it no longer was nine pins but ten pins, and the game continued under its new form.—TIXIER. [This was a favorite sort of travelers' tale constantly repeated.]



FROM A PAINTING BY THOMAS COUTURE

Victor Tixier

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no longer saw those little masses of earth higher than the water which a while before formed the thousand mouths of the "Father of Waters," but large islands separated by wide channels running in all directions. One understood how difficult it is to follow the right direction in this maze and why the first navigators who tried to sail up the river did not succeed in their attempts. It is a fact that Canadians stopped in New Orleans after sailing down the Mississippi.

Farther inland we found immense low prairies which had an unusual appearance. They followed a gentle slope from the river to the sea, which is visible some distance away on the right with the Chandeleur Islands.⁵ The highest part of these prairies is covered with rush reed and macaw trees. Lower, the grass is scarce and on the lowest part the land is quite bare, scattered with trunks of trees lying in the mud and on which white egrets and pelicans perch. The banks of the river are formed by trunks of trees piled upon one another which support the ground. The dwellings, which are small, few, and very far from one another, look like fishermen's cabins. As far as the eye can see there is grass, bare prairies, or the beautiful Mississippi, but not one tree; it is a desert.⁶

The Mississippi, which Indians call "Father of the Waters," is wonderful in grandeur and majesty; its yellow fruitful waters flow at a speed of five miles an hour between low banks which are entirely submerged in the flood season. The river then looks like another sea behind the Gulf of Mexico, above which the houses built on the highest spots emerge like islands.

Farther still, we found stronger vegetation on higher and firmer soil; first, large macaw trees with fan-like leaves, then small willow trees, close together, and finally large trees. In

⁵ The Chandeleur Islands lie due east of New Orleans, therefore to the northeast of Tixier at this time.

⁶ Lyell, traveling in the other direction, described the same stretch of river (*A Second Visit*, II, 114-16).

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some places the narrower points of land still let us see the Chandeleur Bay behind them. On the trees on the lower part of the river we soon saw the famous vulture *Aura*, commonly called *Carrion Crow*, which the Creoles have changed into *Carancro*.⁷ These rapacious birds rid the land of the numerous bodies of animals found so often near houses. That is why they are protected by ordinances; a five piastre fine is imposed on those who kill one of them.

The *Lion* was navigating along with the *Phoenix*, a more powerful boat. In spite of our having left earlier, it overtook us in a short time. The *Phoenix*, with a heavier load than ours, was going faster, although it towed two three-masters and two brigs. The *Lion* got up more steam and a race was started between the two boats.

Those two steamboats, towing seven huge ships on a wide river with a rapid current, belched torrents of black smoke and a million sparks through their steel funnels. The French, American, and Spanish flags were floating in the breeze, and the large river was stirred to bubbles by the paddlewheels which struck it relentlessly. The banks echoed the thunderous noise of the steam engines. The *Lion* and the *Phoenix* raced for half an hour, but the *Lion*, outdone, slackened. Its broken engine needed urgent repairs, which made us lose a great deal of time.

Few houses were built on the shore; they were surrounded with China trees⁸ whose branches were still leafless, green macaw trees, and orange trees covered with fruit.

Night fell and along with it a sharp cold. A prairie was on

⁷ *Carencro* in Louisiana was the name for the turkey buzzard (*carenco tête rouge*) or the black vulture (*carenco tête noire*). See William A. Read, *Louisiana-French*, (Baton Rouge, 1931) 20-22. The name was in use at least as early as the mid-eighteenth century.

⁸ The original text reads *lilas creoles* which Tixier explained in a note as *azédarac bipinné*. Read says that *lilas* is a Louisiana name for the "China-Berry or China-Ball Tree. . . . The tree owes its name to the fact that its flowers resemble the blossoms of the lilac." He gives the scientific name as *Melia azedarach L.* *Louisiana-French*, 48.

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fire; its flames colored the water of the river and the tops of the trees a very dark red. A thick fog rose and forced us to lay anchor, for navigation of the Mississippi is very dangerous because of the numerous boats which ply on it and especially because of a danger specific to navigation on American rivers—I mean the snags.

So do they call those enormous trees, one end of which is buried at the bottom of the river, while the tip of the other is pointed in the direction of the current. During the day they are easy to avoid; they are often to be seen just below the surface of the water; but during floods they are hidden, and for this reason, quite dangerous. Experienced pilots are able to detect their presence by means of a triangle-shaped eddy, more or less marked, according to the distance between the surface of the water and the tree-top, the tip of which corresponds to the apex of the triangle. During the night, it is difficult to see this new kind of reef, which can easily pierce the hull of a boat and sink it.

The trees which form these snags come from the upper reaches of the river and from its tributaries, and for this reason they are found in greater numbers as one mounts toward the source. The great floods carry away considerable portions of the land, and bring down the trees that they have uprooted; the roots, moist and weighted with earth, are heavier than the top of the tree; they sink and bury themselves in the soft bottom of the river, where they are soon fixed. The water drags the tip of the tree with its force, and inclines it in the direction of the current. To free the rivers of these dangerous trees, there has been established, on the Mississippi and on the Missouri, a system of boats which moor themselves to the snags and cut them far below the surface of the water, with a steam-driven saw.⁹

⁹ Henry M. Shreve invented the snag boat used on the rivers since 1829. For him consult the following documents of the House of Representatives: Twenty-third Con-

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As soon as the fog began to disappear, we followed our course at low speed. Already the woods were assuming the appearance that they have along the whole bank of the river, forming what are called "timbers," that is to say, a line which borders the Mississippi.¹⁰ This edge of trees, narrow at first, widens inland as it finds a more solid and firmer soil. Behind it begins the marsh, which extends between the lakes and the sea.¹¹ The houses are larger and closer to one another; catalpas and azedarrachs are planted around them. One can see cultivated fields. This is the rich and fertile Terre aux Boeufs.¹² The levees which protect the land against the great floods are built up along the bank. Civilization is beginning, for here already are Negroes weighted with burdens. Virgin nature vanishes, the works of man have invaded it. We reach a small plain: it is a battlefield, the English Turn, where General Jackson fought on January 8, 1815, an English division which had come to attack New Or-

gress, first session, *Document 98*; *ibid.*, *Report 509*; Twenty-fourth Congress, first session, *Report 383*; Twenty-seventh Congress, third session, *Report 272* (a description of the boat will be found in the letters patent here included); Twenty-seventh Congress, second session, *Report 556*; Twenty-eighth Congress, first session, *Report 538*; Twenty-ninth Congress, first session, *Report 369*; Thirtieth Congress, first session, *Report 30*; Thirty-third Congress, second session, *Report 88*. These documents range from 1832 to 1855. Consult also Caroline S. Pfaff, "Henry Miller Shreve," *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 133.

¹⁰ The original reads: "Déjà les bois prenaient la disposition qu'ils ont sur toute la rive du fleuve, formant ce qui on nomme des *pointes* (timbers), c'est-à-dire une bordure qui longe le Mississippi" (p. 20). This word *pointes* is found neither as standard French nor American-French. It is not in Clapin, Read (*Louisiana-French*), nor Dorrance. Nor have we found it used in other travel books. Tixier must have confused the local use of *point* (simply an extension of the normal coastal meaning) with the formation of the woods along the river.

¹¹ The term that Tixier used regularly was *prairie tremblante*. Later (p. 72) he described it as "sol mouvant où s'enfoncent pour ne plus reparaire les imprudents qui osent s'y hasarder." The phrase is not listed by Clapin, Read, or Dorrance, but it had long been in use in Louisiana. C. C. Robin, *Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane* (Paris, 1807), II, 457, described it by the same expression. Danville's map (1788), reproduced in Robertson, *op. cit.*, shows the country east and south of Lake Borgne to the sea labelled "Shaking Marshes."

¹² The Terre aux Boeufs lies between the river and Lake Borgne, principally in St. Bernard Parish—north, that is, of the "shaking marshes."

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leans.¹³ Blood already on a land which had hardly risen from the waters.

The river followed its sinuous course, and we were beginning to see, behind the flat tree-tops, the signs of vessels moored to the wharves of New Orleans, and the dome of the Saint Charles Hotel, which overlooked them. Finally the *Lion*, which had towed us one hundred and four miles,¹⁴ left us at the wharf on January 27.

We landed and parted from our traveling companions with a shake of the hand.¹⁵

¹³ The English Turn is the lower part of the great bend of the Mississippi below New Orleans. It was so called because in 1699 a British warship, ascending the river, was turned back by the French. For this see H. M. Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana* (second edition, Baltimore, 1817), 27, and Alcée Fortier, *A History of Louisiana* (New York, 1904), I, 43. Lyell (*Second Visit*, II, 122) is a little more accurate than Tixier: "Above the English Turn, and within a few miles of the metropolis, I landed on the famous battleground, where the English in 1815, were defeated." For accounts of the battle, consult Vincent Nolte, *Fifty Years in Both Hemispheres* (Trans., New York, 1854), 202-205; James Stuart, *Three Years in North America*, (2nd edition, Edinburgh, 1833), II, 217 ff.; and Fortier, *op. cit.*, III, 122-42.

¹⁴ Lyell gives the distance from the Balise to New Orleans as "about 80 miles by land, and 110 by water." *Second Visit*, II, 113.

¹⁵ For New Orleans, see the description by James Silk Buckingham who was there about a year before Tixier (*The Slave States of America* [London, 1842], I, 316-96) and Lyell, *op. cit.*, II, 90-110, who saw the town nearly six years after Tixier.

III. LOUISIANA

STEAMBOATS—LOUISIANA LANDS—THE FOOD—HOUSES—THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY—MEDICINE—THE DESERT AND THE SAVANNAH—THE WOODS—THE MISSISSIPPI—THE CHOCTAW¹—THE SAVAGES AND CIVILIZATION—SWAMPS—RIVER FLOODS—DRIFTWOOD—THE CYPRESS GROVE—A CRACK IN THE LEVEE—MARSHES—THE OUATCHA BAYOU—ALLIGATORS—PRAIRIE FIRE—TERRE-AUX-BOEufs—SNAKES—MAGNOLIAS—CHOCTAW TOMBS—WILD CANE—THE *Brûlots*—FAREWELLS

FIVE days later, we left New Orleans to go to Acadia on the steamboat *Robert Fulton*. I went to sit at the front end of the boat, where the passengers had already gathered. Here, there were two types of people; some were excitable and of a dark complexion, others were blond and phlegmatic; they spoke French and English. Some were chewing the savory Perique, or Cavendish, tobacco,² others were veiling the platform with a strong-smelling cloud of smoke from Spanish tobacco. The Creoles were chatting casually, and the Americans, assuming their favorite position, seated, with their feet raised to the level of their heads, kept their hands busy with some occupation while speaking. They did not even stop when the conversation was most animated; it is a constant habit among the Americans to cut, with a knife which they are never without, little pieces of wood, to which they give all manner of shapes, reducing them until there is nothing left. It is still correct, in

¹ Tixier consistently spelled this *Chactas*. For this name and for those of all other Indian tribes I follow the forms used in F. W. Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, *Bulletin 30*, Bureau of American Ethnology.

² "A unique kind of tobacco grown only in the parish of St. James. Périque is said to have the popular pseudonym of Pierre Chenet, an Acadian who first produced this variety of tobacco." Read, *Louisiana-French*, 57.

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public and without embarrassment, to clean the fingernails and the teeth with this same knife.

The typical characteristics of the nation are strongly expressed by the passengers of the steamboats. One can see clearly the pains which an American takes to assume the air of a gentleman, though he will put to one side any annoying convention. He travels almost as though he were alone, and one would think that the other passengers were only there in order to help him pass the time and to amuse him with their conversation.

The French Creoles are losing their national character from day to day; they even pretend to submit to the invasion of Americans, whose language and manners they adopt by preference; therefore, what I have said above is partly applicable to them. I should add, however, to be fair, that the social classes are quite varied on the steamboats; but the true gentlemen pretend somewhat to assume the manners of the common people. It is undoubtedly with the intention of putting into practice what they proclaim: namely, that all men are equal; and in order to be consistent with themselves, they go and sit by the side of a sailor or a gentleman with frayed clothes, and discuss the political question of the day. The gentlemen talk among themselves about politics, grow excited and shout at the top of their voices, even when they are in the society of ladies.

M. de Saligny,³ sent from France to Texas, was sailing down from Louisville to New Orleans, and, for a traveling-companion he had a Yankee, in the presence of whom he was dressing one morning, for there is no way of avoiding this. His neighbor, finding the use of a toothbrush, which he had never known until then, very ingenious, asked M. de Saligny to be kind

³ A M. de Saligny was secretary of the French legation at Washington about this time. Early in 1839 he was sent as minister to Texas. Neither in Lorenz nor in other bibliographical sources do I find any book credited to him. It is possible that Tixier met him in New Orleans. It is also possible that this information was derived from Gaillardet (see n. 6, p. 88, *infra*).

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enough to lend it to him. When the American had cleaned his teeth he wished to return the brush, as he would have done with anything else. M. de Saligny begged him to accept it as a present; the American did not need to be urged.⁴

On another day, near a table which had been set for a meal, a traveler was talking about the difference in good breeding that he had observed between the Americans and the French, and was praising our compatriots highly. He drew from his pocket, undoubtedly through absent-mindedness, a comb which he used while speaking disparagingly of the undistinguished manners of the Americans; then, when he had finished dressing his hair, he wiped the comb with the table-cloth and returned it to his pocket beside his pocketbook.

I apologize to the reader for these unpleasant details; but they are characteristic of a type that one encounters everywhere in the United States, the "half-gentleman," who constitutes the greater part of the population.⁵

One can also see, on board the steamboats, even more extraordinary things; political quarrels followed by fist fights do not surprise anyone any more. Sometimes much more serious things happen; such acts would be called murder in France. After a long bitter dispute about political questions, an American shot at his antagonist with a pistol. He missed him, but fatally

⁴ I have not been able to find the direct source of this story (obviously another of the favorite stock of travelers), but Count Arese, traveling in America with Louis Napoleon some two years earlier, furnishes the same tale, although with a different credit: "Americans read in Fanny Kemble's travels of how a gentleman (if indeed he should be called that) seeing another on a steamboat brushing his teeth, asked him for the loan of his toothbrush when he was finished, and the other very kindly obliged him, but when the brush was returned threw it overboard: the first one was cross and wanted to know if the other thought he had a cleaner mouth than his . . . happily the matter was settled amicably . . ." *A Trip to the Prairies*, 202.

⁵ Tixier seems to have accepted naïvely any story he read, any tale he heard. It is the usual traveler's picture he presents. For other accounts of "steamboat" manners see Stuart, *Three Years in North America*, II, 241 ff. (on the Mississippi River in 1830), and Buckingham, *The Slave States*, I, 466-71 (on the Alabama River in 1839).

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wounded an unfortunate passenger sleeping peacefully in his stateroom. The murderer gave the judges of the supreme court sufficient bond, and crossed the border of a neighboring state. This is the way justice is rendered. A few thousand confiscated piastres suffice to redeem the life of murderers who spend more or less time away from the state where the crime was committed, and who come back later to clear their default; and that is all.

Meanwhile a powerful engine was propelling us against the rapid current of one of the greatest rivers in the world, whose banks presented a new spectacle to me. At first I was struck by the narrowness of the cultivated fields, bordered by the endless edge of the woods. They are separated, one from the other, by fences built at right angles to the river. This regularity has existed in all of lower Louisiana, since the grants were made by former governors. The land-grants were then of a fixed area, *with their breadth facing the river*,⁶ and their length quite varied, according to the bends of the Mississippi. Let me explain.

The course of the river is quite sinuous, and its bends describe arcs of circles that vary greatly in size; in fact, at one place it bends back in such a way as almost to return to its starting point, and farther down forms an immense curve which is part of an even larger circle. Now, in the first case, the two tracts of land which are situated on the curve and which are diametrically opposite to one another meet at a central point which has been decided upon by mutual agreement; while a tract of land situated at the large curve may be only half as wide, it may be twenty times deeper, for much farther on it will meet a tract of land which will cross it, or else it will not meet any, in which case it will extend to the prairie. As a matter of fact, it is impossible that any other land should interrupt it, since only the banks of the river are inhabited. However, a tract of land is le-

⁶ The phrase is in italics in the original.

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gally only forty *arpents*⁷ deep in a single grant, and eighty in a double grant; although no plantation can legally extend beyond these limits, the inhabitants exercise the right of ownership to a greater depth, as I have said above.⁸ There is an exception to this rule in the case of the Terre aux Boeufs, a vast plain where the houses are numerous and distributed as anywhere else.

The houses, built on land sloping from the river to the lakes and the sea, are protected against floods of the Mississippi by strong levees which dam the water during periods of high water; behind these dikes are roads which follow all the bends of the river; these are the only thoroughfares, with a few exceptions, to be found in lower Louisiana; the private roads, used for transportation by plantation owners, are not open to public use.

Open fences are used instead of walls to protect crops.⁹ Cultivated fields, wheron are built the houses and out-buildings, are to be seen between the river and the woods. At first there are forests of oak, walnut, cottonwood, liquidambar,¹⁰ magnolia, etc.; then the dark and insignificant cypress groves end the forests, and beyond is the prairie, covered with tall grass, a land which though still fertile, soon gives place to marshes, unstable soil where those who venture to walk will sink never to appear again; and finally, the lakes and the sea. Such is the general plan of all of lower Louisiana, from the mouth of the Mississippi

⁷ The *arpent* was an old French measure of land equal to almost .85 of an acre. Grants were commonly made, by the French and the Spanish, in strips one *arpent* wide by forty deep. Several such strips might be granted to one person, though the practice frequently was to scatter the holdings of individuals.

⁸ For a discussion of French and Spanish land grants at the time of the Louisiana Purchase, see Amos Stoddard, *Sketches, Historical and Descriptive, of Louisiana*, 243-67. A great deal of information will be found in the several volumes of the *American State Papers: Public Lands*.

⁹ The normal American use of the word *fence* renders the adjective *open* contradictory, but since Tixier uses the phrase *barrières à claire voie*, we have felt it proper to convey his meaning by the expression used in our text.

¹⁰ The sweet gum. William Darby, *A Geographical Description of the State of Louisiana*, 81 n., in 1817 thought it "the most universal tree in Louisiana." Robin, *op. cit.*, gave a detailed description of it (III, 522-24).

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to the parish of the Ascension.¹¹ This can be verified by a simple glance at any map.

The bell for luncheon called the passengers into the cabin. A table literally covered with dried fruit, crackers, cold cuts in thin slices, etc., held also a large pitcher of ice water, surrounded by about twenty glasses; sixty passengers stood two-deep about the table. Those in the second row had to reach between those in the first, in order to seize the food they had chosen with their eyes; and the crowding was considerable; but one had to drink, and the sixty passengers had but twenty glasses at their disposal; therefore several people, whether they knew one another or not, unhesitatingly used the same glass without rinsing it, and often even without throwing away what the preceding drinker had left in his glass. These are indeed primitive customs.

After this meal, I went back on deck. Beyond the tops of the cypress trees rose the thick, black smoke of a prairie fire. These vast conflagrations are regarded as one of the most frequent causes of the immense downpours that occur in this season. As a matter of fact, it rained abundantly that same evening. We passed Église-Rouge¹² and Bonnet-Carré,¹³ and the dinner-bell rang. This meal, on board steamboats, takes place according to curious usages.

There are three shifts. The first dinner, which is the most elaborate, has its own etiquette. As soon as the bell has been heard, the male passengers go inside where the table is already laid. Everyone remains standing behind chairs, not occupying

¹¹ That is, about as far up as Donaldsonville, some eighty miles above New Orleans.

¹² Alliot placed this settlement six leagues from New Orleans (p. 111); he gave the name as Glesets Rouges and Robertson (I, 224, n. 78) corrected this as Cleset's Rouge! Thomas Nuttall, *A Journal of Travels into the Arkansas Territory during the Year 1819*, 313, referred to Red Church as being about twenty-four miles above New Orleans. Lippincott's *New Gazetteer* (1906) did not list this place under either the French name or the English.

¹³ Lippincott's *New Gazetteer* gives this as a post village about forty-four miles above New Orleans, in St. John Baptist Parish. Alliot, *op. cit.*, mentioned it (p. 111).

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those to the rear of the boat, which are reserved for the ladies. The Captain's chair is at the end of the table, between two ladies. The passengers of our boat, silent and bare-headed, awaited a second signal before sitting down. The Captain appeared, dressed in the customary black clothes, and entered the room where the ladies had gathered. He remained there quite a while, doubtless talking to them, and thus gave me enough time to examine the meal which had been served to us.

The table extended the entire length of the room, and groaned under three rows of dishes, which are worth being enumerated. First, three main courses occupied the center row and the two ends, and between these were innumerable dishes of vegetables grouped according to kinds; there were many plates, but they held little. The Captain returned, escorting a lady and followed by the others. When they had seated themselves, the bell rang and the gentlemen sat down. A great many passengers had not been able to find a place, and awaited the second dinner.

During the meal, which vanished within a few moments, I took more enjoyment from watching the interesting combinations of various foods which the guests were piling upon their plates, than from tasting the flavor that results from certain monstrous combinations. I watched especially a neighbor of mine who had placed together samples of all the dishes; he had piled up in front of him a large slice of roast beef, (a true precise translation of *small piece*)¹⁴ of fish, baked apples, onions, mustard, potatoes, sweet potatoes, etc. The hair of Brillat-Savarin would have turned gray in one hour, if that physiologist had seen this new Aristobule Bragg devour this indigestible hodge-

¹⁴ Americans frequently use the litotes, "I thank you for a small piece of meat." The intelligent carver places on the dish held out to him a slice which covers it almost entirely.—TIXIER. [In the original "small piece" is in English and in italics.]

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podge. Everyone helps himself as he pleases, waits for nobody, and leaves the table as soon as he has finished his meal.

When all the guests had left the table, a second dinner, presided over by the Mate, was served and the passengers who had not found room at the first service had their dinner with the engineers. The third service was for the servants on board and for the Negro passengers. I must say that the stewards and waiters on the steamboats of Louisiana are all Negroes; consequently no white man ever eats at the third service.

When we arrived at Acadia,¹⁵ the night was dark and a great downpour put out the fires lit on the shore to point to us the place where we were to land.

M. Robin de Logny¹⁶ received us with a frank cordiality. After supper he suggested that we hunt woodcocks with torches. We went to the hunting grounds and began our preparations in the place planted with gigantic green oaks laden with Spanish moss. These lichens, with long grayish sprigs hanging from the branches of the trees, covered them almost entirely and gave an air of respectable old age to these majestic looking trees. In certain places they grow in such profusion that, seen at a distance, the trees which bear them look like enormous weeping willows.

Some Negroes lit little sticks of dry resinous pine in frying pans which were to give us light during the hunt. There were four hunters and each one walked between two Negroes provided with a frying pan containing fire. We walked abreast in the corn and sugar-cane fields which were barely covered with water. The poor woodcocks, fascinated by our lights, let us approach to kill them easily from a short distance. Our hunt was

¹⁵ He must have landed near St. Michaelstown in St. James Parish. This place is not shown on the U.S. Geological Survey Map of Louisiana; it is to be found on the map of the *Plantations on the Mississippi River from Natchez to New Orleans, 1858*, on the left bank. By Acadia, Tixier meant the Acadian coast.

¹⁶ Robin de Logny (Tixier gave the name as Loigny) married Caroline, the daughter of Zenon Trudeau and Eulalie de Lassize. He was therefore an uncle by marriage of Tixier's friend James.

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not very successful, for the end of the season was near; but in good weather, earlier in the year, one hunter can easily kill a score of woodcocks or even more in one evening.¹⁷

The next day a heavy rain prevented us from going out, and I examined thoroughly all the buildings. The master's house, built of bricks and wood, is situated so as to avoid the insufferable heat which is common during the greater part of the year. The building is protected by a wide gallery which is built around it. Large hallways, on which the doors of the apartments look, allow drafts, and gigantic acacias present to the rays of the sun an impenetrable barrier which keeps the house cool.

However, the rain was not so strong as to prevent us from visiting the grounds, the sugar factory, the refinery, wood mills, etc., and at last the Negro quarters.

These quarters, composed of two rows of wooden cabins, are located so that they can be watched easily. People see to it that they are built at a great distance from the river, in order that the rivermen¹⁸ of the Mississippi, this plague of Louisiana, cannot have traffic with the Negroes at night. These sailors, known as chicken thieves, encourage slaves to steal, promising them whisky in exchange for the objects that they have taken away. The

¹⁷ Timothy Flint described deer hunting in Louisiana under similar conditions (*Recollections of the Last Ten Years ... in the Valley of the Mississippi*, Boston, 1826, p. 339): "Their most interesting hunts are practised by night, and are called fire-hunts. The dogs are leashed together. One dog carries a bell. Two or three black boys carry over their shoulders fire-pans, being a grating of iron hoops, appended to a long handle, and filled with blazing torches of the splinters of fat pine. The light is brilliant and dazzling. A group of gentlemen, clad in their hunting frocks, mounted on fine horses, the joyous cry of the attending dogs, the blacks with their fire-pans, the whole cavalcade as seen at a distance by the flickering light among the foliage of the trees, furnishes altogether a striking spectacle. They scour the woods. The deer is tracked. The hound that carries the bell is unleashed. The other dogs know his note and chime in on his key. The bell indicates where he is. The deer, dazzled and appalled by the glare and the noise, arouses from sleep, and gazes in stupid surprize. The eyes are discovered, shining like balls of fire. The hunter aims his rifle between the eyes, and the poor animal is sure to fall. Such is the most common mode."

¹⁸ *Caboteurs* is Tixier's word. For the legends associated with this type, see Walter Blair and Franklin J. Meine, *Mike Fink, King of the Mississippi Keelboatmen*.

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house of the overseer is generally built near the river, and at the other end of the quarters is built the hospital.

The cabins of the Negroes are rather large and each one, protected by a wide projection of the roof, is divided into two parts, which each lodge a family composed of three or four members; I say family although there is little among this poor race of what the word family expresses: men and women are never joined in religious or legal wedlock; they take and leave each other by mutual consent. The women are not extremely faithful, their husbands know it; and therefore they do not show much affection for their children. The pickaninny born on one plantation belongs to the master of his mother: this rule prevents any arguments, for it often happens that a Negress has for a husband a slave of a neighboring plantation.

The Negroes are well fed and decently clad; their work is well regulated: every day of the week the Negro must accomplish a task which is carefully proportioned with his age and strength; as soon as it is fulfilled, he is free and uses as he pleases the time which is left to him. He can sleep or work for his master who pays him then like an ordinary workman. Sundays belong to him; then he works only for money. After the sugar-making,¹⁹ the Negroes have a holiday of eight or ten days, during which they are almost free.

Some of them are more fortunate. The house servants are treated almost as well as white ones. In a large number of Creole houses one can see Negroes who never leave their mistresses and who are treated as if they belonged to the household. Even more often one can see mulattoes and quadroons and especially girls of the latter variety who live in the house of the master on a familiar footing, which seems surprising at first, for they are destined to become servants of the children of the house whom

¹⁹ *Rouaison* is the word Tixier used; by way of explanation he added in a foot-note: *fabrication du sucre*.

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they treat as brothers; they almost always have good reasons to do so.

The merciless code for the Negroes is no longer enforced. The master does not have the right of life and death over his slaves in all circumstances; he may kill his slave only when the latter has struck him; in all other cases, to make a death sentence legal, it must be pronounced by a jury composed of the parish. The punishments that the master may inflict are the whip and the irons.

One can notice that the Negroes who have never been punished can avoid chastisement by good behavior; they consider it an honor never to have been whipped; but as soon as the *commandeur*²⁰ who carries out the sentence of the overseer has struck then everything is changed; the slave bears the punishment bravely and laughs at the whip which cuts his flesh and which is covered with his own blood.

The Negroes are not so unfortunate as one generally thinks; but nowadays philanthropy is in style and enlightened philanthropy is not the only kind accepted. Long sonorous words should impress only the emptyheaded; freedom for the Negro, Negroes are men like us, is a great slogan here on which people burst forth into flowery rhetoric, with which one arouses the sentiments of the noble souls whose dream is universal happiness; but the true philanthropist can wonder whether the Negroes are ready for liberty and if their intelligence makes them worthy to be compared with us.

I would like with all my soul to see all men free and equal, but unfortunately absolute equality is impossible; people have too different degrees of intelligence, and wisdom can only allow a liberty which one cannot abuse. If one wishes to free the Negroes, let him study the whole question where it exists and

²⁰ A gang boss, apparently. Robin, *Voyages*, III, 173, used the term in much the same sense. Clapin, Dorrance, and Read do not explain it.

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delve into the character of the blacks and weigh the results that their freedom might bring.

The black race is ordinarily inferior to ours so far as intelligence is concerned; their passions on the contrary are violent and without limits; laziness dominates their lives. Leave these men without regular compulsory work, and passions will be given a free reign when fatigue no longer dominates them.

This race, it is true, is stunted by slavery, but will enfranchisement alone develop their intellectual faculties while they are dominated by animal spirits? Will you take away from the whites this prejudice of color which will always separate the two races and which renders the most fervent abolitionists so inhuman to the Negroes?

Shall we not destroy our colonies by this philanthropic measure? Shall we not, out of human kindness, be exposing our compatriots of Guadeloupe and Martinique to a fate similar to that of the inhabitants of Santo-Domingo? Let us not adopt ideas from the other side of the Channel without a severe and thorough examination. What can England lose by suppressing slavery? Jamaica. But Spain will lose rich Cuba; France, the West Indies. Let us wait for the results: Jamaica is not yet on the road to progress.

In America, states with slaves do not speak of enfranchisement, but they improve the fate of the Negroes and attach them to the soil which they work. Only few importations are made, and they are declared illegal; the Negroes born in the country are happy, and the plantations prosper; therefore the Southern States wish to keep their Negroes in a mild slavery, and the planters, by virtue of the Lynch law, hang abolitionists caught in the very act. If a question carried some day to Congress was decided in favor of enfranchisement, the states with slaves would separate from the free states rather than obey Congress, for they know that without slaves they cannot exist.

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It is, therefore, important to clarify this question by new inquiries. As for me, if I had to answer, I would say: Give the Negro intelligence before giving him liberty, to prevent him from being ruined by freeing him too soon. Then prepare the minds of this generation to give liberty to the generations to come; for you cannot hope to reconstruct in ten years the moral structure of a human race stunted by centuries of slavery, a race whose limited intelligence would not understand the benefits of liberty.²¹

We had chosen dinner time to visit the quarters. The Negroes were eating in their own cabin; their rooms were clean and their beds protected by mosquito netting. The men looked at us shyly and with fear, but the women looked at us more boldly, the young ones especially. The pickaninnies of both sexes, almost naked, were playing outside the house.

The infirmary, composed of two large rooms, separated by a covered terrace where the convalescents take the air, did not hold any patient at the time. A score of very clean beds were conveniently arranged for servants and a little pharmacy contained well-chosen medicines.

The inhabitants are all more or less doctors, and are helped besides by old mulatto women, who claim that they are very skillful. The physicians of Louisiana are well aware of what these wretched women can do, for they come and oppose their experience to that of the practitioner, and obtain better obedience than he. They use unknown drugs, extraordinary formulas which capture the confidence of the Negroes, often that of the whites themselves, and have the doctor blamed for the blunders of the women.

As we were leaving the infirmary some Negroes performed the *Carancro* dance for our entertainment. It is an imitation of

²¹ Every traveler in the South included remarks on slavery. For a view of conditions in the beginning of the century, see Stoddard, *Sketches of Louisiana*, 331-43.

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the long walks that the suspicious vulture takes around a dead body to assure himself that it is really deprived of life before preying upon it. A slave had painted himself and made up in order to look like a carrion crow; several other Negroes accompanied with sad songs which describe the caution of the carrion crow the motions of the dancer around a child lying on the ground. The expressions and the attitudes of the Negro were so amusing and so realistic, that we applauded his talent for imitation. This man had spent many hours studying his model before imitating him in public.²²

The following day we rode on horseback to visit the fields called the *Desert*.²³ The canefields are well drained by wide ditches and separated from one another by roads which are very convenient for transportation. What grows on these roads is used for fodder, after all the work is completed and carting is no longer necessary. Open work fences of cypress wood are built at regular intervals; they border the roads which are constantly used for the transportation of materials and wood, and separate the lands of each plantation and the different groups, rice fields, the sugar cane fields, and the savannahs.

The savannahs of Louisiana are very different from the prairie; they are natural meadows enclosed by well-made barriers, used as pasture lands for the cattle of the plantation, and considered among the most productive types of land. The prairie, on the contrary, is a large desert of fields where the plow has

²² Among the Creeks "the buzzard dance is said to have been a very pretty affair [!], the arms of the dancers being spread out and made to flap like the wings of the buzzard." John R. Swanton, "Religious Beliefs and Medical Practices of the Creek Indians," *Forty-second Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, 534.

²³ *Desert* was simply a term for *cleared land*; in practice it meant fields under cultivation of some sort. Cf. Robin, *Voyages dans l'intérieur de la Louisiane*, II, 346. According to the map of the *Plantations of the Mississippi*, the Logny estate lay on the west of the river whereas the lakes are to the east; these locations are approximately twenty-five miles apart.

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never been used; it is an uncultivated wild land which man's hand could never make fruitful without unlimited effort. In the first savannah that we had to go through, I noticed a great many hollow cylinders of earth about a foot high, made of successive layers; they are called *cheminées d'écrevisses*.

There is a sort of crawfish which lives in the ground and even seems to avoid water, and these crustaceans dig very deep holes in the ground and surround the entrance with these chimney stacks which I have just mentioned. These pipes prevent the rain from flowing into the holes which remain dry even when the ground is covered with several inches of water. The chimney stacks are made of mud which becomes so hard when drying that it is hardly softened by moisture. Their adherence to the ground is so strong that it is not an easy matter to destroy them with your foot. Land crawfish look very much like ours; they are longer and colored a lighter green. They are dangerous enemies for the inhabitants, as we shall see later.

We then entered the woods, but we were not able to go very far: the cypress grove was flooded and the waters which were flowing even in the paths had made them unusable; and yet we heard axe strokes of Negroes who were cutting down cypress destined to make cords of wood.

The exploitation of the woods presents great difficulties. People generally use *cypre*,²⁴ or bald cypress, for building and heating. It is an excellent wood which can be split easily into thin boards, but it is necessary to gather it in the cypress grove and carry it to the river bank where the steamboats buy it to heat their boilers. The cypress grows in marshy ground and it is only with much work that it can be brought out of the woods. To let the reader better understand the means used for this purpose, it is fitting to say a few words on the draining of the water.

The level of the Mississippi, in all lower Louisiana, is higher

²⁴ *Cypre* was the Acadian form of *cyprès*, Read, *Louisiana-French*, 35.

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than that of the land, and the river does not receive the smallest streamlet; the slope toward the cypress grove has been used to drain the water in that direction. For this purpose they had dug a canal on every estate, to collect the water from all the drains and conduct it through the cypress grove into the bayous, those natural canals about which I will tell more later.

During the rainy season, the cypress grove is flooded with several feet of water and the canals are overflowing. This is the method used to transport the wood. Four or five strong Negroes skillful at handling an axe go to the cypress trees, riding along the canal in a boat. The chosen tree is attacked at water level with an axe; it is important for the Negroes to direct the fall of the cypress carefully, for it might crush them in its fall, and many careless woodcutters²⁵ have been the victims of their negligence. Once the tree has fallen the branches are cut off the trunk and there remains only to tow a huge piece of timber, among the trees, to the canal, and from there to the house where it is sawn, split, and piled up on the levee awaiting the passage of the steamboats. When the cypress grove is not flooded, it is very difficult to take the trees out of it. One can only get the cypresses which grow on the banks of the canal.

We took advantage of a sunny day to go across the river and visit a charming family, who were relations of my host.²⁶ I admired in this house, as I had in those I had seen already, the sweetness and simplicity of the private life of the Creoles. The inhabitants lead a pleasant life indeed, served according to their wishes, living in abundance and even luxury. They might be very happy if they cultivated their acquaintances a little more: only men visit one another; the ladies seldom leave their homes

²⁵ Tixier used here *bûcheurs* which was common in Canada (Sylva Clapin, *Dictionnaire Canadien-français*, 61) and Missouri (Ward Allison Dorrance, "The Survival of French . . .," 63) for the standard *bûcherons*.

²⁶ The widow of Zenon Trudeau in 1858 had a plantation across the river and about a mile below that of her son-in-law, Robin de Logny.

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to call on one another; the care of their children, of their home, occupies them entirely. They are excellent mothers and the families are usually very large.

This house located on a promontory went, a few years ago, through an accident which happens frequently in this country. In one single night the river tore away two *arpents* of land and came very near the house. Landslips of this kind are caused by the sharp bends of the Mississippi and the variations of its level.

The Meschacebe, as you know, describes innumerable curves, and its current always running directly from one point to another undermines the ground against which it strikes, but the landslips which are the natural consequence of this destruction of the lower parts of the bank take place only when great floods have thoroughly soaked the upper layers. As soon as the water recedes, the masses of diluted earth are no longer supported, and fall noisily into the river; the destruction of the point is the more likely, when it is narrow and projects far into the water. The river, however, does not gain in width, for it constantly lays down in the bottom facing the lands in danger a new soil which rises every year and forms *battures*. This new soil belongs to the owner of the estate in front of which it is formed. Thus one sees in a few years' time houses which seem to move inland while others seem to approach the Mississippi every day.

If the river shows itself hostile to the Louisianians, it renders them innumerable services; were it not for it, what would become of the trade in this country where you hardly find any roads, except along the banks of the river? The Mississippi bears three-masters, brigs, schooners, huge steamboats, flatboats,²⁷ etc.: it is a wide thoroughfare between the North, the East, and the West. Thanks to her beautiful river, Louisiana is able to receive

²⁷ A kind of flat-bottom boat laden with corn or cattle which comes down mostly from the states bordering the Ohio River.—TIXIER. [In the text he used *chalands*; in the note the expression "*bateaux plats* (flat bottom boats)."]

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products from almost all the other states. There is nothing as admirable as those fleets which ply on the Mississippi; and one often sees riding at anchor in front of a house a large five-hundred ton three-master, laden with sugar and ready to sail.

We left the Acadians toward the middle of February. The muddy waters of the river were beginning to swell and carry enormous trunks of trees rooted up by the floods of the tributaries of the Mississippi. We stopped twenty miles above New Orleans, at M. Sauv 's house.²⁸

This house, which except for a few details looked like all the others, sheltered a few Choctaw families at the time.²⁹ They had left their great village located on that part of the Red River which separates the territory of Missouri from Texas, in order to come and spend the winter in Louisiana. On the edge of the wood the savages had built a score of cabins covered with fan palms.

My first care was to be shown to these former masters of the country. I expected to find real savages, an unknown language, painted faces, clothes made of skins, strange utensils, carved weapons. At some distance from the camp, I met a Choctaw wrapped up in a soiled wool blanket, his head covered with a black hat decorated with circles of tin and red feathers, walking unsteadily, his face flushed, his look haggard from drinking. This man opened his mouth, and while I expected the traditional *O h*, he uttered in French a perfectly pronounced greeting. Good-bye my cherished illusions! However, I approached

²⁸This was probably Pierre Sauv  II, born 1805, married Telzire Fortier, and died in 1867. He was the son of Pierre Sauv  (born Dunkirk, France, 1769) and Rosalie Second, of Marseilles. Arthur and Kernion, *Old Families of Louisiana*, 81 ff. His sister, Adelma, married Ren  Trudeau. Pierre Sauv  was, then, another uncle of James de Berty Trudeau.

²⁹For the Choctaw, consult David I. Bushnell, Jr., *The Choctaw of Bayou La-comb*, and John R. Swanton, *Source Material for the Social and Ceremonial Life of the Choctaw Indians*. A brief account will be found in Hodge, *Handbook of the American Indians*, I, 288-89.

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the huts. A few girls, sitting around, were busily weaving baskets of reed; when they saw me they hurriedly got up and ran to their huts to hide themselves. I went to a group of men draped in their blankets who were lying around a large plate of *sagamité*.³⁰ They greeted me and one of them invited me in French to partake of their meal. I accepted. Those among the Choctaw who could not speak French pointed to their plates repeating: "*Tchoukouman-finan*," which meant: "It is very good," and although I did not share their opinion I soon said to be agreeable: "*Tchoukouman-finan*"; my pronunciation made them laugh.³¹ They asked me for whiskey, the only product of civilization the name of which they knew. I had nothing but tobacco to offer them. They drew from a skin bag a pipe which I thought would be, if not a beautiful calumet, at least a pipe of red stone with a stem of reed; it was, alas! but a poor pipe made of white clay perfectly similar to those which are called in France *brûle gueule*.

All these savages had a broad face with prominent cheek bones, dull dark eyes, long greasy hair hanging over their shoulders. All of them, men and women, were tattooed with a sinuous blue line which started at the corner of their mouths and which reached the lower back part of the jaw.

While we were smoking the calumet of peace a young woman of remarkable beauty came out of a neighboring hut and in a sweet harmonious voice called Baptiste, one of the savages who spoke French, and hurriedly retreated under her fan-palm roof.

Soon the Indian women became more sociable and came back to resume their basket weaving. All were small, had good figures, but were perfectly ugly and untidy. Baptiste's wife

³⁰ Corn boiled in salt water.—TIXIER. [Cf. Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 407-408.]

³¹ The curious may amuse themselves by comparing Tixier's version of Choctaw with that in Cyrus Byington's *A Dictionary of the Choctaw Language*.

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came out also; her face was expressive rather than beautiful. It would be very difficult to describe the grace of her smile and the softness of her eyes. The only French word she knew was her husband's name. I complimented Baptiste on the beauty of his *tahik*,³² and the chief did not show any displeasure when I told him that his wife was worthy to be the first lady of the nation for her beauty. I have all reasons to believe that this flattery was not understood by the one to whom it was indirectly addressed.

We entered the cabin of Baptiste who invited me to sit down on deer pelts spread on the ground. He lit his pipe and after a few puffs passed it to me; in return for his politeness I gave him a few cigars which he accepted with pleasure. When our calumet was used up Outamié gave me a dish of *sagamité* which I tasted through courtesy; I had shown an extreme good will and she should have been very grateful, for her poor cooking could hardly excite my appetite.

Baptiste told me that the Choctaw were the largest and the oldest of the red tribes, and that they were the stock of the other nations. This claim is common to all of them. He related to me the wars of his people against the Chickasaw, and the periodical migrations of his tribe. "We live on the banks of the Red River," he said to me in a French-Creole dialect, which resembled the one spoken by the Negroes of Louisiana,³³ "and we come to spend the snow season on the grounds of this country. We have to travel through cypress groves and wide prairies before reaching the end of our journey, but we always go in a straight line; white people would wander and lose their directions. We know how to avoid the numerous snakes who live on

³² "Wife" in Chactas.—TIXIER. [Read, *Louisiana-French*, 107, gives *taique* as *squaw*.]

³³ For this dialect, consult Edward Laroque Tinker, "Gombo: The Creole Dialect of Louisiana," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, XLV N.S. (April, 1935), 101-142.

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the lands we travel through; we are not afraid of them and we have sure ways of healing ourselves when bitten by them."

The Choctaw, or rather Chahtas, as the missionaries who translated the sacred books into the Indian language spelled the name, make a living in Louisiana from the results of their hunting; they destroy every year a large number of rabbits and stags which are sold in the settlements or in New Orleans; in spite of this trade, their living is scanty, for they use their money to buy whiskey rather than more necessary things. The women sell baskets.

The Choctaw are easily tolerated because of their discretion; they never harm the settlements and never take the liberty of cutting sugar cane in the fields near which they build their huts. The lovers of hunting are the only ones who do not allow them on their lands.

These savages know many medicinal plants and know how to use them properly.³⁴ Generally speaking, the redskins of the South have more medicinal knowledge than those of the West or in the North. Is this so because wholesome herbs are more abundant in the South?

A great many of these Indians are vaccinated; they know how to bleed and to purge, they give emetics and sudorifics quite suitably. They seem to know very well how to treat syphilis. A Negro whose nose had been destroyed by a venereal ulcer that no one had been able to cure had become an object of repulsion even to his companions of slavery. Exempted from work, he had been relegated to a hut built by him at the edge of the wood. The Choctaw undertook to cure him and succeeded in obtaining a complete healing of the ulcer.

They use against the bites of venomous snakes *l'herbe-à-son-*

³⁴ See Bushnell, *op. cit.*, 23-25, and Swanton, *Source Material for ... the Choctaw*, 226-41.

³⁵ Is this possibly the Sampson snakeroot to which Swanton refers (*Source Materials ... Choctaw*, 237)?

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*nettes*³⁵ and the root of the sycamore³⁶ tree which they crush while fresh. They put this pulp on the wound and have the patient drink the juice obtained from the bruising of the roots.

These poor savages have come in contact with civilization, and whiskey has lowered them below the level of brutes. The same thing happens to all red tribes that accept the so-called benefits of civilization. They are soon degraded, they degenerate, and then disappear. By a gift of alcohol, one can obtain anything from a redskin, and one might easily urge the red nations to insurrection with a few barrels of brandy; for this reason the importation of hard liquor in the countries where they live is strictly prohibited; but in Louisiana the Choctaw live in small isolated groups, which are quite harmless. Alcoholic spirits can do nothing but stupefy the poor Negroes; they are allowed to intoxicate themselves. They ought to be pitied, yet no one thinks of helping them; they are laughed at and scorned instead of being assisted.

I came back to New Orleans a few days later; I heard the news of one of those disasters which, so frequent in the United States, are generally attributed to malevolence; the Saint Louis Hotel, where the merchants' exchange of the Creole district was held, had just been destroyed by a fire.³⁷

³⁶ Tixier's word is *cotonnier*. Since he continually shows an interest in local word usage, we translate this by its American meaning: *sycamore*. See Read, *Louisiana-French*, 30, and Dorrance, "The Survival of French . . .", 69. Where Tixier means the cottonwood, or Carolina poplar, he uses the term *peupliers cotonneux*.

³⁷ Tixier's word is *bourse*, but for nineteenth century America this is best translated as *merchant's exchange*. Buckingham described the hotel in some detail (*The Slave States*, I, 333-35):

"The Saint Louis Hotel, sometimes called the French Exchange, is in the French quarter of the city, fronting on three streets—Rue Royale, Rue Saint Louis, and Rue de Chartres. This building was projected by the French citizens and merchants of New Orleans, as a rival to the great American Hotel, and was begun in the same year, 1835. It was intended to combine all the conveniences of a City Exchange for the French quarter, a hotel, a bank, large ball-rooms, and private stores; and the cost was estimated at 600,000 dollars, exclusive of all furniture, which sum, it is said, has been already exceeded, though the establishment is not yet quite completed. Its size is very large, having a front of 300 feet on the Rue Saint Louis, and 120 on each of the

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The New Orleans fire department, a half-civilian, half-military organization, has frequent occasions of showing its skill and bravery; few weeks pass without one's being awakened at least once by alarmed clamors or the light of a fire. The Saint Charles Hotel, the cupola of which proudly rose above the American district, had the same fate shortly after I had left Louisiana.³⁸

This building, which served as both Stock Exchange and hotel, was of the same style as our Pantheon, with peristyle

other streets, Rue Royale and Rue de Chartres; but not having the portico, pediment, or tower, of the American building, it is not so imposing in its appearance as the St. Charles Hotel.

"The entrance into the Exchange at the Saint Louis, is through a handsome vestibule, or hall, of 127 feet by 40, which leads to the Rotunda. This is crowned by a beautiful and lofty dome, with finely ornamented ceiling in the interior, and a variegated marble pavement. In the outer hall, the meetings of the merchants take place in 'change hours; and in the Rotunda, pictures are exhibited, and auctions are held for every description of goods. . . ."

In less than two years after the fire the hotel was "completely restored to its original splendor." Norman, *New Orleans and Environs*, 159.

³⁸ I find no record of the burning of the St. Charles. Buckingham's description is worth quoting (*The Slave States*, I, 331-33):

"The St. Charles, which is also sometimes called the American Exchange Hotel, is not only the largest and handsomest hotel in the United States, but, as it seemed to me, the largest and handsomest hotel in the world. At least I remember nothing equal to it in any country that I have visited. The City of London Tavern, the Albion, the Freemasons' Hall, the London Coffee House, the Crown and Anchor, the Adelphi, Fenton's Hotel, the Thatched House, the Clarendon, and Long's Hotel, in London, are all inferior to it, in size, cost, and elegance. Neither Meurice's, nor the Hotel de Londres, nor the Hotel Rivoli, or Hotel Wagram in Paris, can compare with it; and even the Astor House at New York, the Tremont at Boston, and the American Hotel at Buffalo, all fall short of the St. Charles at New Orleans.

"This building was undertaken by an incorporated company, in 1835. It was designed and erected under the superintendence of Mr. J. Gallier, the architect. The ground on which it stands cost 100,000 dollars; the building 500,000 dollars; and the furniture 150,000 more, the whole expense being thus about 150,000 sterling. Its principal front, in St. Charles-street, is 235 feet; and its depth is 195 feet. Its height, from the pavement to the cornice, is 75 feet, and to the top of the lantern or tower that surmounts the dome, 185 feet. The number of its rooms is 350. The gentlemen's dining-room is 129 feet long, 50 wide, and 22 feet high, with two ranges of Corinthian columns, and space to dine comfortably 500 guests. The ladies' dining-room is 52 feet long by 36 wide. The ladies' drawing-room is 40 feet long by 32 wide; and the gentlemen's drawing-room is 38 feet square. The kitchen is 58 feet long by 29 wide. Such is the scale of the principal parts of this large establishment."

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colonnade, cupola and lantern tower. One might have found in it great architectural defects: for instance, the facade ended on one side with a right angle and on the other side with an obtuse angle. It was the only remarkable building in New Orleans. It stood out all the more because there was beside it a church, a poor attempt at gothic, built of red bricks and decorated with carved wooden figures painted in white.³⁹ Such lack of taste is common in the United States; let me invoke the testimony of those who have seen the Capitol of Harrisburg, which can be admired in Pennsylvania.

Flowers and snakes began to appear, and I decided to take a trip to Lake Pontchartrain with one of the passengers of the *Republican*. The lake railroad took us there in a few minutes across woods and marshes covered with iris of various colors which produced a marvelous effect. We went along the lake on a small road which leads to Saint John Bayou. One could see picturesque schooners going in all directions on the calm sea; most of them came from Mobile and went to New Orleans through the bayou. The weather was magnificent. Though hardly the end of March, it was quite warm already. We walked back on the shell road, a winding, always dry path running along the bayou-canal and across the woods and marshes bordered with gigantic cypresses.⁴⁰

The insalubrity of New Orleans is attributed to these marshes. All conceivable attempts have been made to drain them. The level of the land cannot be raised, for it is impossible to bring

³⁹ Apparently the First Congregational Church, on the corner of St. Charles Street and Gravier; it was erected in 1817. Norman, *New Orleans and Environs*, 101.

⁴⁰ "March 5, 1846.—From New Orleans I made a short excursion with Dr. Carpenter and Dr. M'Cormac to Lake Pontchartrain, six miles to the northward. We went first along the 'shell road' by the Bayou St. John's, and then returned by the canal. The shell road, so called from the materials used in its construction, namely, the valves of the *Gnathodon cuneatus* ... is of a dazzling white color, and in the bright sunshine formed a strong contrast with the vegetation of the adjoining swamps." Lyell, *Second Visit*, II, 106 ff.

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enough earth to fill them and there are no stones in this part of the country. One company has made many attempts at draining these marshes. Every summer the results of its work can be seen, but the rain and floods make its efforts useless and the final results are negligible. This enterprise must be given up, and it will be necessary to wait for the natural rising of the land. It will be long to come, for the waters of the Mississippi, held back by the levees, no longer cover these marshes and leave their silt on the land.

Our walk had given us a fine appetite, and we enjoyed an excellent dinner which was completed by a dessert of Havana fruit. I compared our hothouse pineapples with those of the West Indies and thought I was eating a different fruit, so superior is the fragrance of the latter. Their oranges and pomegranates, however, do not compare with ours. If bananas were a little less dry they would be, in my opinion, the best of fruit; their flesh is unctuous, fine and fragrant. The coconuts deserve in all respects the consideration of the gastronomists, as everyone knows. But as for me, I prefer European fruit to American, for one soon tires of the latter. Theirs is generally either too sweet or lacking in flavor, while ours is always seen again with pleasure.

At the end of March, the Mississippi, swelling because of the floods of the rivers in the west and in the north, was beginning to carry enormous trunks of trees and its wide surface, *level* with the levees, gave it the aspect of a lake ready to inundate the country. Vegetal remains and huge trunks were rolling on one another as they were carried down by a swift current. A new industry was started. Negroes, riding light barks, went among this fleet of trees and chose the best pieces, which they brought to the shore. Strong capstans powered by men or horses pulled them high and dry. This driftwood, cut and shipped without much trouble, is a great resource for the country. In settlements where wood is a scarcity it is possible for a hundred Negroes to

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gather enough wood for two years, and to save the cypress grove during the same length of time.⁴¹

While I was gazing at this enormous body of water, this huge breaking of trees, and the work of the Negroes bringing the biggest pieces of wood on the shore, a serious accident took place. A slave belonging to M. Sauvé was driving the horse at the capstan when the bar broke near the pole and struck the head of the negro, knocking him down. I was called immediately and found in his head three or four wounds, beneath which I saw that the cheek bone and the skull were broken. In that season there was a danger of tetanus besides the seriousness involved in such a complicated wound. I followed the mode of treatment which I had so often seen applied by my good and scholarly master, Professor Sanson,⁴² and succeeded beyond all my hopes, for I avoided the probable danger to the brain and saved the patient's eye, which at the moment of the accident could be seen through a wound of the eyelid.

This instance and that of a Negro injured by a splinter from a bursting gun, whose wound had healed up so quickly that it had closed over a large piece of wood, which in France would have caused an abundant suppuration, impressed me considerably. I soon found that in this country illnesses have an open, rapid course and end very promptly with either recovery or death. It is, therefore, very important for the doctors not to make a mistake in diagnosis; they must act quickly and energetically, for it happens frequently that one day after the beginning of an illness it is too late to fight it if the doctor has not recognized it, or if he has neglected it at the start. Bleeding is

⁴¹ Cf. Bringier's discussion of driftwood in his "Notices of the Geology . . .," *The American Journal of Science and Arts*, III (1821), 17-20.

⁴² Probably Louis Joseph Sanson (born Paris, January 24, 1790, and died Paris, April 1, 1841). He taught, wrote much, was celebrated as a surgeon, and won many honors. See Michaud, *Biographie Universelle*, XXXVII, 659-61.

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very beneficial, but in a climate as hard on the system as this one it would be dangerous to overdo it.

A kind resident, Mr. Edouard Guiot,⁴³ to whom I had been introduced recently, wished to entertain me with a stag hunt. We made an appointment, and on a beautiful morning we rode on horseback into the woods. The forest looked to me such as I had imagined it would, from the descriptions of Chateaubriand and Cooper. The powerful and magnificent vegetation of America, the enormous trees entwined with creepers, the huge fan palms were for me a new, impressive sight which overwhelmed me with admiration. But this was not the time for dreaming, for if I had not concentrated on directing my horse I soon would have been thrown. In one place I had to jump over a fallen tree, in another I had to ride around an inextricable thicket of brambles and creepers; farther on, I had to pull my cap threatened by branches hanging low, to extricate my legs or my gun from a bush, to follow a roundabout way in order not to fall into a mud hole, to dismount when crossing a bridge of logs which rolled under our feet and would certainly have broken our legs if we had not been careful when crossing it. I thoroughly enjoyed these obstacles, because for a very long time I had been wanting to see this wilderness and be able to appreciate fully the delights of silence.

We arrived on a higher ground called Terre-haute or Bocage where a wood of magnolias was growing. We stopped and, after loading our guns near a hut inhabited by a family of Irish woodcutters, I went alone to enjoy the wonderful scenery of this beautiful forest, not untrodden, unfortunately, for the dark cypress grove was exploited, and one must go very far to find absolutely untrodden forests. Man, whether white or red, has vis-

⁴³ The map of the *Plantations of the Mississippi River, 1858* does not show any holding of Edouard Guiot. However, it gives only the plantations above New Orleans.

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ited all the forests of America and everywhere has left devastation as a mark of his passage.

Our hunters arrived with eight quite handsome beagles, which had a reputation for being valiant beasts. There were five hunters. Three went to post themselves on a canal to stand in the way of the stag on its return. This was a very good occasion for me to see the cypress grove with a man who was perfectly acquainted with it.

For about a quarter of an hour we went along a very wide canal that had recently been dug. The oak and sycamore forest was growing thinner; the fan palm became more common and soon we found some cypress, scarce at first, then growing more numerous. This part of the forest is called *la fausse cyprière*. Then we left the canal. Mr. Edouard looked at the time, watched the position of the sun, a very important precaution for finding one's way, and a few minutes later we were deep in the cypress grove. The bloodhound was released and soon we heard his sonorous voice sounding in the silence of the old forest; the other dogs, unleashed, came nearer. We were then walking with great difficulty in the high grass among fan palms, stumbling constantly against crumbling roots and decayed trees. Suddenly Mr. Edouard motioned me to stop and made me take notice of a large congo snake in front of us, lying in the sun on a fallen tree. This reptile is frightful looking and very dangerous, even more dangerous than the rattlesnake, for he does not give warning of his presence, and boldly attacks men and animals. My companion went straight to him, pushed him down with the barrel of his gun, and jumped over the tree without any more ceremony. I followed his example; but was very careful to pass very far from the snake. This reptile was not the only one there, for a few moments later I saw a dog running away to avoid being bitten by another congo which had sprung after him. A little farther I was beginning to choose carefully where I set my

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feet, when I saw myself surrounded by three of these animals looking at me. I swerved somewhat not to disturb them.

The dogs were barking loudly, following a fresh scent. A sudden crumpling of leaves announced the flight of a stag which the dogs had just routed. Mr. Edouard sent me to occupy a nearby place of concealment behind the pack of hounds, whose voices I soon no longer heard. When I was alone in the midst of the forest, standing in water up to my knees, I smiled as I remembered the well-known cartoon by Raffet: "It is forbidden to smoke but you may sit down."⁴⁴

I easily found the clearing where I was to post myself; I chose a dry spot and made ready to fire. But I had time to wait and admire the impressive forest.

The *cypre* or bald cypress (*Cupressus distycha*) is a magnificent tree; its trunk, perfectly straight, rises without branches to a height which varies between sixty and eighty feet. Its flat top is formed by horizontal branches which bear a dark thick foliage almost impenetrable to the rays of the sun. The foot of the tree is divided into a multitude of roots, which give to its cut end a radiated or stellated form. The roots grow very far and form knees from which hard, pointed, and smooth excrescences grow to a height of four or five feet. These points, called *boscoyos* by the Spanish, are found in enormous numbers in cypress groves.⁴⁵ The smallest hurt one's feet and may cause dangerous falls.

The cypress trees were four or five feet apart. The land on which they grow is marshy, as I have said. Sometimes one sinks down to his knees in a liquid mud; sometimes the water is knee-deep; sometimes one suddenly falls into the burrow of a muskrat or an alligator. This soil bears a thick grass which is three or four feet high. The wide leaves of the numerous fan palms also

⁴⁴ Denis-Auguste-Marie Raffet (1804-1860), painter and lithographer, acquired fame by his illustrations, battle-pieces, and caricatures.

⁴⁵ Read (*Louisiana-French*, 14) lists this as a French word, *boscoillot* or *boscoyo*.

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limit the horizon already made narrow by the trees and the creepers. The scene is animated by large grey squirrels climbing up the trees around which turtle doves, red tanagers and blue jays of Florida are flying. The higher ground is stocked with stags and raccoons. The water is filled with muskrats, alligators, crawfish, and frogs; myriads of crustaceans, and aquatic insects swarm among water plants. On fallen trees several varieties of congo snakes and large adders lie in the sun in the clearings.

Nothing is so solemn and lugubrious as a cypress grove. The darkness, the impressive silence, the profound solitude, the dangers of every step inspire the mind with religious thoughts. The depth of a cypress grove is a real poem; the largest forests in our Europe, the century-old fir trees of our mountains cannot give an adequate idea of its grandiose and stark majesty.

Already Mr. Edouard had been gone for a long time. The voices of the pack of hounds had faded away, and I remained in contemplation of this funereal sublime setting, plunged in the midst of a silence as frozen as that of a tomb. However, the animals, reassured by a calm that nothing disturbed any longer, resumed their noise and for the first time I heard among their voices the roaring of the bull frog, which the Creoles call *ouararong*.⁴⁶

The repeated thumping of the engine of a steamboat far away on the river came at regular intervals and faded out in the clearings of the cypress grove. Yonder, I thought, was this advanced civilization, this trade, this activity, this struggle, victoriously waged by a man-made machine against a swift current and an avalanche of trees, obstacles created by God; here, this wild primitive awe-inspiring nature—an impressive contrast, which gives matter for thought in a cypress grove. Over there,

⁴⁶ *Ouaouaron* is the more usual spelling of this word. See Clapin, 233, and Read, *Louisiana-French*, 98.

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sophisticated people on a land which is not completely formed yet; here, century-old trees still full of strength and life. It was a great, magnificent poem, a sublime page which absorbed all my thoughts. But I must give up the idea of describing the cypress grove. The most eloquent words would be cold and colorless, unable to express the profound emotion I felt as long as I remained alone in this large sepulcher. Why do not great poets seek inspiration in a forest of cypress trees?

At last the voices of the hounds aroused me from my reverie. They were reëntering the cypress grove after following the stag in the prairie. A shot coming from our lookout men was repeated by the echo. The barking of the dogs immediately stopped and started again; I heard another shot, more remote; the dogs then remained silent.

I heard three reports in succession, and knew that I had to leave my post. I went toward the place where I supposed the hunters would be, but followed the wrong direction. After walking around for a long time I found myself again in my former clearing. Often a glade made me think that I was coming out into the prairie or the desert. All the trees were alike, and the only indication which might have guided me was useless, for on entering the forest I had not watched the position of the sun and the direction of the shadows, and I knew that even with the help of this kind of compass, men who were well acquainted with the cypress grove had lost their way forever. I had been told that a Negro set out one day to hunt raccoons and that two months later his skeleton was found near a canal which would have led him to his master's house.

While I was trying to find the canal which had guided us here, I lost my way to such an extent that I scarcely heard the signal they often gave me to call me back. This time I listened attentively, looked at the direction of the shadows, and came back to my companions almost directly. They were very wor-

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ried, for the shots I fired now and then to answer their signals showed them that I was going away from them while walking around continuously. I had followed this wrong track for almost two hours, and when I arrived there, exhausted and covered with mud, my hands and my face were bleeding, torn by brambles and creepers.

Everybody congratulated me, believing that I had just killed a stag. I denied this, but they accused the Indians, naturally, of having stolen it. One of the hunters, indeed, had seen Baptiste's dog hunting along with ours. The next day I verified in the Choctaw camp that they had killed the animal and sold it in New Orleans.

A few days after this hunt, in the beginning of April, huge flocks of plovers pitched in the savannah; curlews with thin beaks and small red shanks which they call *tiorouks*⁴⁷ were running in the grass and the rice fields, or thick flocks were flying very close to the ground. These were literally slaughtered. In this easy hunt, one can sit near a fence and has not to wait long before a flock passes within shooting distance. One can easily come near these birds and kill them. When they flew away, shots from all directions could be heard; at every step one came upon a wounded plover or curlew running away in the savannah.

At this time, the river broke its dykes and made a *crevasse* in the levees protecting Mr. McCutchon's lands situated a few miles above M. Sauvé's estate.⁴⁸ I went to visit the scene of the flood. The gap was from fifteen to twenty feet wide, and the water of the river had filled a basin between the two levees. The

⁴⁷ This term is not to be found either in standard dictionaries or in Read, *Louisiana-French*.

⁴⁸ *Plantations on the Mississippi River, 1858* shows lands belonging to J. W. and S. McCutchon on the left (east) bank about ten or twelve miles north of Sauvé. Sauvé's Providence Plantation was to be the scene of a famous *crevasse* on May 3, 1849.

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second dyke, more recently built, was not strong enough yet, and had yielded to the pressure of the water. This second opening, fortunately, was not opposite the other; the current did not strike it directly, and the angle that it necessarily described considerably decreased its violence.⁴⁹

However, the friction of the water was undermining the edges of the gaps and the openings were gradually becoming larger. The water, higher than the ground, fell into the basin and washed out the earth behind the first levee. The road had been destroyed, the barriers had been carried away, a huge lake was covering the cultivated lands and extended into the woods, farther than the eye could see. Three hundred Negroes from the neighboring settlements were busy building a dyke in front of the gap of the second levee. It was impossible to repair the first before the water had lowered its level. With two rows of pegs, they made in the basin a cage into which they threw fagots and turf. Four days and four nights of continuous work stopped the widening of the gap, which they succeeded in closing completely. The flood was stopped, communications were re-established, but the damage was irreparable. The river, when flowing over, had filled the ditches and torn away the sugar cane, which was already quite tall. The whole crop was destroyed.

When a large gap occurs, the disaster is complete. The water falling from the river digs excavations in the ground sometimes fifty feet deep, which cannot be filled after the water has flowed away and the levee has been repaired. The crops are destroyed, the smaller houses torn away. If the gap is very wide, and if only one levee protects the land, it is impossible to stop the water, and the people must wait until it recedes to its former level before repairing the dyke. When the water has receded, there remains on the soil a thick layer of mud which makes it higher

⁴⁹ On the crevasse cf. Brackenridge, *Views of Louisiana*, 314 ff. and Darby, *Louisiana*, 57 n. On levees see Brackenridge, *op. cit.*, 308 ff.

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and announces abundant crops, but which causes many a serious illness.

In order to protect themselves from such dreadful accidents, the inhabitants watch the levees very carefully. They repair them frequently; as soon as a levee is seen growing weaker, they build another one some distance behind it; but they do this early so that the soil recently gathered may have time to be heaped up and compressed before the water has washed out the original levee.

When the water rises, it is an interesting sight to see the inhabitants spending nights on the shore, watching the stages of the flood, building and strengthening their dykes. There is a certain kind of accident which is difficult to foresee. Muskrats and land crawfish, which dig their burrows in the levees, are often the cause of cracks. Water flows into their holes and washes the earth away. In one night a crawfish can dig through a levee. Water flows through this new channel, saps its walls, widens it, and washes a wide way for itself through the dyke, which by the next day is destroyed. It is especially when the water is high that land crawfish dig their galleries, and at such times, when a careful watch is kept, the smallest opening is stopped as soon as it is seen, but it is not always visible and there is no known means of destroying these dangerous crawfish.

When the water is high, the difference of level between the Mississippi and the land is very noticeable. From the second floor of a house one can see the numerous ships plying the river above.

With better reason than anywhere else one can say that the river waters the land; from the height of the levee it dominates the land, and one thinks with fear that if this powerful body of water washed out the dykes, the whole of lower Louisiana would be flooded in a very short time.

A former senator, Mr. Milligan, invited us to spend a few

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days in his house located at the English Turn near the battle-field made famous by General Jackson's victory. A barouche, the calash of this country, brought us to Mr. Milligan's house in a few hours.⁵⁰

We had dinner with Mr. Saul,⁵¹ who took us the next day to the other side of the river to shoot snipes in the prairie. We crossed the long narrow strip of woods which edges the land and becomes thinner in proportion as one goes down the river. We finally came to a flooded prairie from which at every step numerous snipes flew away. While walking, we found the earth less strong and thinner. We had already left the land covered with water and we were walking on a crust, the elasticity of which was felt under our feet. We did not stop for fear of sinking into the mud. We were in the *Prairie tremblante*.⁵²

When going down the river, or the low lands, one finds marshes on which one can walk only by going very fast and at the same time with much caution, always putting one's foot on the roots of trees and tufts of reed; when walking on this floating ground one seems to be always on a plane lower than the one he has just left, for the floating crust somewhat yields under the weight that it carries. The hunters who go into these prairies are careful to hold their guns horizontally, in order to use them as points of support if they happen to sink into the mud. Many men have sunk into the swamp never to come out again.

Several times I slipped through the strong crust on which I was walking into that thick mud beneath. However, I pulled myself out, and was able to come back to more solid though marsh-like ground where numerous black adders, frogs of all

⁵⁰ The *Biographical Directory of the American Congress* does not contain a Senator Milligan from Louisiana. Possibly he served in the state senate.

⁵¹ The *Plantations on the Mississippi, 1858* shows a T. H. Saul estate on the right (west) bank of the river nearly opposite Pierre Sauvé. Unfortunately this map shows nothing below New Orleans. Vincent Nolte had trouble with some members of the Saul family of which he spoke with feeling (see his *Fifty Years, passim*).

⁵² See n. 11, p. 36, *supra*.

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kinds, and crawfish were swimming. We crossed the river on the yawl of a schooner moored in front of the plantation, where it had taken on board a cargo of sugar.

The following day we took a more interesting trip. Behind the house the Bayou Ouatcha⁵³ begins near the place where the planned railroad will go across the point separating the English Turn from New Orleans (this will shorten the distance between these places by two-thirds). We left early, armed with those guns which Americans call rifles and followed by one Negro. We embarked in the canal on the estate. Now and then we had to land in order to push the boat, for clusters of water vegetation made our efforts with the oars perfectly useless. After two hours of continuous effort, we passed a dry prairie behind the wood and entered the bayou. The Negro sitting in back steered the boat, and in front we made our preparations for hunting. We were going to shoot alligators.

That part of the bayou into which the canal flows is a hundred feet wide at the most. Its muddy banks are hidden by high tufts of reed and rush, behind which rises a beautiful forest of sumacs, cotton woods, and walnut trees of various species, covered with black creepers and long twigs, which hang from the higher branches. White creepers with fragrant flowers, ivy, and convolvulus surrounded the trunks of old trees and rejuvenated them with their green shoots; and on younger trees *herbe-à-la-puce* opened its red bell-flowers.⁵⁴ The bayou water, thick and reddish, was very quiet and reflected the rays of a beautiful sun. Many alligators were asleep on the surface, and looked like stumps of trees rather than living creatures. Most of them

⁵³ For the origin of the name Ouatcha see Read, *Louisiana-French*, 46-47. It was applied to a lake, however, rather than to a bayou. The *Plantations on the Mississippi, 1858*, gives this as Lake Washa; today it is known as Lake Salvador. The bayou referred to is probably that now called the Barataria or a branch of it.

⁵⁴ Read, *Louisiana-French*, 45, says this is poison, climbing, or three-leaved ivy and that the term is used in Canada for poison oak, but he adds that some natives of Louisiana give this name to the trumpet-flower.

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showed nothing but their heads, and with these the illusion was perfect. As we approached, the alligators disappeared in the water but gradually and so slowly that the water showed hardly a ripple at the place where they had sunk.

In the meantime we came within reasonable distance of one of them, and as the whole upper part of his body was above water, I aimed carefully and fired. The bullet hit him, the beast leaned to the side, moved his feet convulsively and struck the water with his tail with violence. We rowed hard to seize him, but before we had been able to reach him he disappeared, and bubbles coming up to the surface of the water announced that he was dead. The bayou was too deep for us to fish him out. We went on our way. Our shots followed one another in rapid succession; the alligators did not become afraid and came up as soon as the boat had passed. James⁵⁵ had killed three, which, like the first one, had dived and which we had to give up trying to capture.

I thought I would find some alligators in the rush; I asked to be brought to the shore but did not see any. After walking along the bank for a quarter of an hour, I saw the head of an enormous alligator coming out of the water twenty steps from me and slowly approaching the bank. The animal could not see me behind the thick bushes where I was hiding, or else perhaps he had plans concerning me. I propped my gun against a tree and, the animal having stopped, I shot him between the eyes. He remained motionless for a while, then crossing the bayou, went to hide among the reeds on the other side, leaving the water of the bayou red with his blood as he passed. I climbed into the boat, which we steered to where my alligator had sought refuge; we saw him without being able to hit him. He was slipping among the grass with remarkable nimbleness, leaving large spots of blood on the reeds.

⁵⁵ James de Berty Trudeau. See Editor's Introduction.

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Finally James succeeded in killing a young one and bringing him on board. He was four feet long. At last one was wounded in shallow water; when he tried to flee I seized him by one hind leg, and with great difficulty and the help of my companions, succeeded in tying him tightly.

The largest alligators I saw in this bayou were not quite eight feet long. Those huge alligators, often seen formerly, are seldom found nowadays. The steamboats have driven them away from the river and they are found only in creeks, bayous, and large cypress groves. The medium sized ones still exist in great numbers. They are not very dangerous and cause few accidents. On land they are not to be feared because their build does not allow them to move rapidly. The bayous are too far from the houses and too marshy to entice people to go bathing in them. However, big alligators have sometimes seriously wounded careless children.

Anxious to see a prairie fire, we decided to ignite the prairie which separated the bayou from the wood, but we had no tinder box; the Negro helped us by striking a flint with his knife. He had in his pocket a piece of dry decayed wood which he had covered with powder. Thus he obtained a fire which he transferred to some dry grass. In a few moments a long stretch of flames went across the prairie. The wind spread it rapidly; the grass burned, producing a column of thick black smoke. It became an immense furnace. Soon we heard the cries of the small quadrupeds who lived in this desert. The muskrats were not able to run away quickly enough from the fire which surrounded them. It was too late to stop this destruction. Who would think of putting a prairie fire out? A change of direction of the wind, and a stream, the only obstacles which might stop the progress of the flames, brought this magnificent sight to an end.

We came back along the bank of the canal, towing our bark. At each step large black adders spotted with yellow (king-

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snakes)⁵⁶ fled at our approach. Back at the settlement it was not an easy matter to carry our wounded alligator. I had the idea of tying a rope around his neck and leading him as with a leash, or, rather, to drag him, for the alligator showed himself very mulish.

We returned to New Orleans the next day in Mr. Saul's barouche. Our host brought our attention to the fertile Terre-aux-Boeufs on the left bank.

This land is quite different from those which are seen in lower Louisiana. The cultivated fields extend for several miles from the banks of the river to the lakes, and the houses are not in one row as they are above and below this point. In this plain there are neither marshes nor cypress groves.

In the Terre-aux-Boeufs one finds only one kind of rattlesnake, the length of which does not exceed eighteen inches; it is the *Crotalus miliaris*. These snakes are rare but very dangerous. Their small size makes them more difficult to detect than the other kind, also found in this country, the *Crotalus horridus*, whose proportions are much larger.

Venomous snakes are very common, as species or as individuals, in Louisiana. The largest of all is the *Crotalus horridus*, the most common rattlesnake in this state. It is sometimes as large as from fifteen to eighteen feet in length, and there have been counted on one individual thirty-two complete rattles. However, it rarely reaches this size; generally, it is not over eighteen feet long.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ The word *king-snakes* is in English in the original. The king snake is a constrictor, not a poisonous snake; large ones are often two inches in diameter and six feet long. Raymond L. Ditmars describes it as blackish with a pale green spot in the center of each scale. See his *Reptiles of the World*, 268-71.

⁵⁷ The figures are exactly as in the original text (p. 60); it is possible that Tixier intended five and eight feet instead of the lengths mentioned. The largest of rattlers, the diamond-back, is eight feet long. For these snakes consult Read, *Louisiana-French*, 69-70; Ditmars, *Reptiles of the World*, 349-59; Leonhard Stejneger, *The Poisonous Snakes of North America*; Van Denburgh, *The Reptiles of Western North America*, II, 908-965.

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These snakes are slow and lazy. Although they carry a deadly venom, they flee the presence of mankind, and bite only when frightened or attacked. Their venom acts so quickly that it is often impossible to save the victim. A Negro bitten by a rattlesnake while weeding a sugar cane field called out to his master and fell dead. A child had seen a rabbit enter a hollow tree; he stuck his arm into the opening and died without a cry; a rattlesnake had made the tree his home.⁵⁸

It is a fact that the venom of the rattlesnake is enclosed in a special system located in the upper jaw. It is so placed that they can bite themselves to death. Their flesh is white and does not seem to be injurious; the Negroes eat it with relish after carefully removing the head.

They like high and dry places; they are found on the highlands, in magnolia woods, in the desert, and sometimes in the buildings of the plantations. When floods produced by cracks in the levee have covered the places where they live, rattlesnakes can be found in great numbers on the spots remaining dry. This fear of water does not prevent these snakes from swimming; they have often been seen crossing the Mississippi.

A Negro was cutting down a young tree which was quite bent, when suddenly a rattlesnake fell on his head and coiled himself around his neck. This man, frightened, ran to his master's house about forty *arpents*⁵⁹ away as fast as he could. The tail of the snake was rattling close to his ears and increased his terror. The snake was killed and it was noticed that its fangs were caught in the woollen jacket the Negro was wearing. This story is interesting, for it proves that rattlesnakes can climb trees, a fact which had been denied.⁶⁰ These snakes have not,

⁵⁸ Ditmars, *Reptiles of the World*, 354, says that the bite of the diamond-back is usually fatal within less than an hour.

⁵⁹ As a linear measure the *arpent* was about 192 feet.

⁶⁰ Possibly Tixier derived this from Trudeau, who in turn had it from Audubon or possibly Tixier was familiar with some of the literature of the controversy over

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like boas, the ability to coil around branches, but it has been proved that they can creep up a sloping trunk of a tree. Their backbone is very weak; it is easy to kill them by striking their backs with a thin flexible rod.

It has been written that the rattle of this snake is formed "by the skin rolled around itself like the finger of a glove and tied to the end of the tail." But nothing substantiates this statement, and if one notices the constant, identical shape of all the rattles, their structure and their overlapping, one is rather inclined to think they are a growth of the epidermis, and a direct observation doubtless will change this presupposition into a certainty.⁶¹ I will add that several Creoles have assured me that they had seen rattlesnake skins completely separated from the animal which had just shed them.

A rarer snake, the moccasin, known by the Creoles under the name *bâtarde de sonnette*, has a skin spotted like the rattlesnake's. It differs from him by the absence of a rattle and by its smaller size; it is more dangerous than the other kind, for it gives no warning of its presence.⁶²

The copperhead is the rarest of all venomous snakes; it is said to be very swift and very dangerous.⁶³

The cypress groves and low marshy places are populated by three kinds of black *trigono-cephalic* snakes called congos; they are dreadful because of their number, their strength and the

these snakes. Cf. for example, J. J. Audubon, "Notes on the Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), in a letter addressed to Thomas Stuart Traill, M.D. &c," *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal*, III (1827), 21-30; and John Abert, "Habits of Climbing of the Rattle-snake. Extract of a letter from Col. Abert, of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, to Dr. Harlan of Philadelphia," *North American Journal of Geology and Natural Science*, I (1832), 221-23.

⁶¹ On the formation of the rattles, see Stejneger, *op. cit.*, 380-91.

⁶² The Creole term is not to be found in Read, *Louisiana-French*. The water moccasin attains a length of four to six feet. Consult Ditmars, *Reptiles of the World*, 331-37.

⁶³ The copperhead is a pale brown crossed by reddish brown blotches, with a coppery tinge to the head; a large one is about a yard long. Ditmars, *op. cit.*, 338.

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quick action of their venom. This species, the most horrible, has repulsive features. The congo has eyes of extraordinary brightness and fierceness set in a small flat head with a cut-short muzzle. Its thin neck swells when the animal is angry. Its large, irregularly shaped body ends suddenly in a thick tail no more than three inches long. These snakes are short and massive looking; their coils are heavy and ugly; but they can spring against the object of their wrath quite forcefully. When they wish to jump, they stand almost perpendicularly on their tails, bend like a bow and suddenly spring forward. These three Louisiana kinds are little known in Europe. They differ by their size and color. One is entirely black, the other veined with dark dirty grey, the third spotted with dark red.⁶⁴

The characteristics of venomous snakes are in no other species as well marked as in the congo. Their earthy color, the fierce expression of their bloodshot eyes would alone suffice to encourage caution at first sight.

The biting mechanism of these snakes is well known nowadays. It is known that they do not bite, but strike. They open their mouth until the lower jaw reaches their neck, and they strike their victims a blow with their heads which causes their fangs to penetrate their entire length.

Should one believe the stories told about the *serpent à corne*?⁶⁵ It is said that there is a snake whose tail is armed with a horn through which a canal gives passage to a deadly venom. Several people have assured me of this fact, among them a Spanish Creole, an inhabitant of the Atack-Apas,⁶⁶ where this snake lives, according to hearsay.

One day I was brought a very unusual snake. It had been

⁶⁴ Congo, (*Louisiana-French*, 121) is the Creole and Acadian name for water moccasin or cotton-mouth moccasin. See n. 62, p. 78, *supra*.

⁶⁵ For the horned rattlesnake, see Van Denburgh, *The Reptiles of Western North America*, II, 953-58.

⁶⁶ Attakapas. For a description of this country, see Darby, *Louisiana*, 97 ff.

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found on a *matelas*⁶⁷ of sugar canes, and when people came near to kill it, the snake fled very quickly, squirting through his tail a whitish fluid unbearably rank. I examined the reptile. It had none of the characteristics of venomous snakes. Its head was small with a round muzzle, its neck was large, its body cylindrical. The tail was a prolongation of the body. Its hexagonal scales, flat and black, were separated from one another by whitish intervals. The sides of the body were of a bright red color and a few stripes of the same color marked its stomach. The mouth, small and similar to that of the adder, was not armed with fangs; finally, the tail ended with a real horn, perfectly conical, six *lignes*⁶⁸ high and two *lignes* wide at its base. No sign of a canal in this cone nor of an opening at the top.

The Spaniard I mentioned found a great resemblance with the famous horned snake about which they tell so many amazing stories.⁶⁹ There is perhaps something true at bottom of these stories.

Besides having venomous snakes, Louisiana is populated with adders of all sizes. I have one which has reached its full development; it is three inches long. Several have very bright coats and are remarkable by the elegance of their shapes and the swiftness of their motions. They are found everywhere, in woods, ditches, courtyards, houses. Some of them, called egg eaters, ransack chicken coops. They are often found and killed in apartments.

Another snake is remarkable for its extreme nimbleness, its length and its long thin tail; it is the *serpent fouetteur*.⁷⁰ It coils

⁶⁷ A layer of sugar canes kept to be planted.—TIXIER. [Not listed in Read, *Louisiana-French*.]

⁶⁸ A linear measure equal to $\frac{1}{12}$ inch.

⁶⁹ For stories about the horned snake, see Swanton, "Social and Religious Beliefs of the Creek Indians," 251, and Swanton, "Religious Beliefs and Medical Practices of the Creek Indians," 494, 502.

⁷⁰ "The coach-whip snake . . . a long, slender snake, which is erroneously believed to be able to lash its foe with its tail."—Read, *Louisiana-French*, 39. Consult A. I. Ortenburger, *The Whip Snakes and Racers*.



FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN WOODHOUSE AUDUBON

James De Berty Trudeau

LOUISIANA

itself around the legs of those who have frightened it, wriggling with surprising speed and striking sharply. It is not dangerous at all.

I did no more but go through New Orleans, and came back to M. Sauvé's house. The Choctaw had left for their big village after burning their huts; but they had not carried away the bones of their dead. There was a burying ground for the redskins in the woods of a nearby settlement. The owner, aware of my great desire to visit the tombs of the savages, wished to come with me on this expedition. A Negro followed us with the necessary excavating implements. On the way the planter told me that he was not afraid of exciting anger among the Choctaw by opening this tomb. "On their return," he said to me, "they will engage in their medicine⁷¹ to find out what became of the bones you will take away, for it is impossible to conceal from them the violation we are going to commit. They will guess you were the one who opened their tombs, but it remains to be seen whether the truth will be revealed by the juice of *cassine*⁷² they will drink or by information cleverly gathered."

"You know," he added, "that on one of our lakes there is a small island where the savages had formerly established their

⁷¹ For the word *médecine* in the text Tixier gave a footnote: *sortilège*.

⁷² "All the *Allibamons* drink the *Cassine*; this is the leaf of a little tree, which is very shady; the leaf is about the size of a farthing, but dentated on its margins. They toast the leaves as we do coffee, and drink the infusion of them with great ceremony. When this diuretic potion is prepared, the young people go to present it in calabashes formed into cups, to the chiefs and warriors, that is the honorables, and afterwards to the other warriors, according to their rank and degree. The same order is observed when they present the Calumet to smoke out of: whilst you drink they howl as loud as they can, and diminish the sound gradually; when you have ceased drinking, they take their breath, and when you drink again, they set up their howls again. These sorts of orgies sometimes last from six in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon. The Indians find no inconveniences from this potion, to which they attribute many virtues, and return it without any effort."—Bossu, *Travels through Louisiana*, trans. by Foster, I, 249-50. Robin, *Voyages*, III, 513, describes a tree of this name. See also Read, *Louisiana-French*, 84-86, who gives additional references. Cf. the article on "Black Drink" in Hodge, *Handbook*, I, 150.

TIXIER'S TRAVELS

*hutte de tombeaux.*⁷⁸ They had placed there little stone *manitous* probably made on the Red River, for, as you have noticed, there is not one stone in this part of the country. Two Creoles went to visit this island during an absence of the savages, and one of them, to play a trick on the Indians, threw one of these figures into the lake. On their return the Choctaw noticed the disappearance of their patron deity and made a medicine to find where it had been hidden. I do not know which means they used; anyway they fished it out. Then they walked around the neighboring settlements bearing their *manitou* saved from the water, foreboding the author of the violation a near and awful death. They said this to everybody and seemed not to know whom they thus threatened. However, a few years later, the man who had thrown the *manitou* into the lake was poisoned by a mulatto woman of his household with whom he had been living a long time."

While talking about savages, we began to talk about the Indian women whom the Creoles find to their taste and whose virtue seldom resists the temptation of a few piastres.

We were then walking through a wood of magnolias in full bloom. The half-light, the delightful fragrance, the pleasant coolness of the place made us wish to rest in this grove. I admired these beautiful trees with dark shiny leaves covered with beautiful flowers so white and delicate, with the pretty cone with scales they have in their center, the garlands of creepers in bloom among which cardinals and Florida jays were playing. There was something both sweet and grandiose about the scenery. When I got up to leave, I saw a rattlesnake quite close to me; at the foot of magnolias a hideous rattlesnake: contrasts as always.

⁷⁸ This is not properly a burial *house*; the Choctaw "scaffolded" their dead and later buried the bones, as did many other tribes. For their burial customs see Swanton, *Source Material ... Choctaw*, 170-94.

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We soon arrived at a thicket of brushwood in flower, among which the *tom-beck-be*⁷⁴ opened its red clusters covering some pieces of bark laid side by side. We raised them, and the Negro, after digging a foot deep, found a second layer of decayed bark, then another under which lay the skeleton of a woman still wrapped with rotting rags. I took the head without digging any deeper and we put the pieces of bark back into their previous position. My guide assured me that in spite of these precautions the savages would easily find out that their tombs had been violated.

The time to leave was growing near. I was going to leave Louisiana soon to visit the other states of the Union. I returned then to the Acadians to bid a last farewell to the charming hosts who had received me so kindly and cordially.

Mr. Bringier⁷⁵ took us one day to hunt a stag in the woods which belonged to Mr. Hampton's⁷⁶ magnificent mansion.

⁷⁴ A kind of trumpet flower very common along the Tom-beck-be River, which flows into the Alabama.—TIXIER. [See also Robin, *Voyages*, III, 409-410; he spells it Tombekbé.]

⁷⁵ Louis Bringier was born in the Tchoupitoulas district of Louisiana August 25, 1784, and died at New Orleans October 29, 1860. He was the son of Marius Pons Bringier and Françoise Durand who arrived in the colony in the 1780's and bought several plantations in St. James Parish, which were presently formed into the famous White Hall Plantation (*La Maison Blanche*). Louis seems to have lived an adventurous life. He was at New Madrid at the time of the famous earthquake and for years was the official surveyor in Louisiana. Lyell met him in New Orleans in 1846. His brother Doradou was a more provident person and succeeded to the place of importance and wealth that their father had held. For this family consult Grace King, *Creole Families of New Orleans*, 413-18; Arthur and Kernion, *Old Families of Louisiana*, 426-30; Lyell, *Second Visit*, II, 175; and L. Bringier, "Notices of the Geology"

The *Plantations on the Mississippi*, 1858 listed a number of plantations, near and slightly below Donaldsonville, all in the name of Mrs. M. D. Bringier: one, without name, opposite the mouth of La Fourche; next below an intervening holding is Hermitage Plantation (built by Doradou Bringier after his marriage in 1812); about four miles farther downstream is Houmas or Two Sugar Houses Plantation, extending along the south boundary of Ascension Parish as far as the Rivière des Acadiens; several miles below is Whitehall, in St. James Parish; these are all on the left (east) bank.

⁷⁶ There were at least three Wade Hamptons: the first one was born in Virginia in 1751 or 1752 and died in 1835. He was involved in the Wilkinson affair (*Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 212-13). It was he apparently who created this "mansion." The others were his son (1791-1858) and grandson (1818-1902).

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After crossing enormous thickets of brushwood where the dogs had soon roused a stag, we arrived on a high land planted with tall cottonwood trees. These majestic looking trees grow very far from one another on a ground covered with wild canes. Farther down, the marsh begins, the trees disappear and are replaced by actual forests of wild cane, which go as far as the cypress grove. These *bancs*,⁷⁷ as they are named in the country, are almost impenetrable. The stems of the reeds, very close to one another, are bent, broken, and intertwined by the wind. They grow in all directions. It is necessary to use an axe or fire to make any progress through these entangled stems. The paths cleared with the ax are soon impassable, for the marshy ground bristles with the stumps of the cane that bend down and present their dangerous sharp points.

These huge forests of reeds are the favorite grounds of venomous snakes, and when the corn is fully mature they are used as a lair by the black bear. This animal walks through the cane fields breaking them between his forepaws. He has chosen this shelter which he thinks safe, but courageous hunters can reach him by using the track he has cleared. They shoot him point blank. If the bear is not killed on the spot, the man, hindered by the canes, is forced into a narrow space with his enemy, who cannot run away, and he has to wage a hand to hand fight. The bear, standing on his hind legs, approaches with his mouth wide open and his fore legs held out to seize his aggressor, whom he will press and break; but the hunter keeps his coolness and shoots the bear dead with his pistol, or else several blows with the terrible bowie knife bring an end to this dreadful struggle, in which, however, the bear is sometimes victorious.

⁷⁷ This term is not in Read, *Louisiana-French*; the text, however, makes the meaning quite clear.

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We did not find any bears when walking through the canes; the season was not far enough advanced. On the other hand, we were assailed by swarms of mosquitoes and small black flies which attack the nose, the eyes, the nostrils and the mouth, the mere contact of which gives a lasting sensation of a burn. They are called *brûlots*.⁷⁸ In spite of the clouds of smoke we blew toward them, it was impossible to get rid of these confounded insects; our hands, always busy pushing aside the pointed canes tangling the narrow path we followed, could not defend us from the assaults of our winged enemies. It was a real torment.

I was going to sail, but before leaving I wished to visit once more the cypress grove and the magnolias. I went alone in order to enjoy the silence better and to feel in its entirety the regret one feels when leaving forever places where his heart has been deeply moved, but the cypress grove and the coppice were filled with unbearable insects; swarms of mosquitoes and *brûlots*, ticks, ants of all kinds assailed me from all sides; at each step snakes sprang up in front of me. I left this magnificent place almost cursing it. The Louisiana summer was about to begin.

I got on board the steamboat *General Pratte*⁷⁹ which was going up to Saint Louis.

⁷⁸ Clapin, Dorrance, and Read do not list this word. Arese, *A Trip to the Prairies*, 74, however, confirms Tixier: "The night was horrible, without a minute of sleep because we were so tormented by the *maranguens*, which are a sort of giant mosquito, by the *brûlots*, another species that takes its name from the agreeable [burning!] effect produced by its sting." Cf. the Buffalo gnats of Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, 18, 28.

⁷⁹ According to an advertisement of May 5, the *General Pratte* had been expected to arrive in Saint Louis on the 6th. The *Missouri Republican* on the 13th announced that "the new and elegant steamboat *Gen. Pratte*, T. J. Casey master, is now ready to receive cargo . . . For freight or passage apply to Berthold, Tesson & Co." The *General Pratte* must have left New Orleans on May 4 and been at Natchez on the 7th (see n. 14, p. 91, and n. 22, p. 94, *infra*).

Tixier traveled on the *General Pratte* during its first season but not on its first trip. Apparently it first arrived at Saint Louis on March 9, 1840, for on the next day the *Missouri Republican* described it as "this new and truly elegant boat . . . in many respects, the most elegant craft on the western waters, and is a proud testimonial of respect to the memory of the worthy man whose name she bears. The *Gen. Pratte* was built in Pittsburgh during the last winter."

IV. THE GENERAL PRATTE

PLANS—THE CREOLE LADIES—PHILOSOPHY—HURRICANE—THE PRAIRIE—A RACE—WHAT THE WORD *City* MEANS IN THE UNITED STATES

I HAD planned to return to France with a fellow passenger of the *Republican*, M. A. Guérin.¹ James and a young Frenchman who was going to Canada were to take the same route as ours as far as New York. We made a plan of our trip. After spending a few days in Saint Louis we were to visit one or two redskin nations, then sail up the Illinois River to Peoria, go to Chicago to sail across the Great Lakes, and, after admiring the Niagara Falls, go down to Albany and New York on the Hudson; this plan however underwent serious modifications, as always happens when one is traveling.

During the first day we were passing between banks I loved. I bid them farewell. In front of each house I had visited I saw again its inhabitants sitting on the levee. Knowing we were leaving, they were waiting for our passage and waved to us from a distance. I could not say how deeply I was moved by this mark of friendship, and, in spite of the very cool breeze which rose on the river, I spent the whole day on deck looking for a last time at this land I would never see again. Once more I admired, although from afar, the large cypress tops crowning the woods which bordered the horizon and the green rows of cane already high. During the night we passed the limits of the cypress groves and the cane-growing country.

On board was the family of the man after whom the boat was named, General Bernard Pratte² of the American Fur Com-

¹ For Guérin, consult Editor's Introduction.

² Tixier is here confusing two Bernard Prattes. The elder, frequently referred to as General Pratte, was born in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, June 11, 1771, and died April 1, 1836. He married Emelie Labbadie (the daughter of Sylvester Labbadie and Pelagie

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pany. One of the members of this company, Major Chouteau,³ to whom we had been particularly recommended, showed us much attention and consideration. The Major is one of those men whose faces show natural kindness. For a long time he lived the life of the Osage on the prairie. He was one of the best hunters⁴ in that nation with whom he traded in fur. "Now that old age is approaching," he said, "I am resting from my hardships; formerly I wasted little of my time at school, and I completed my education at the Osage academy."⁵ The Major persuaded us to visit the nation with whom he had lived; he promised to recommend us to the chiefs and invited us to take advantage of an occasion that we might never have again. The Osage were setting out on their summer hunt; we might follow them onto the prairie and hunt the bison with them. I accepted

Chouteau), was long an important figure in the fur trade, and filled a number of public positions. Their son, Bernard Pratte, Jr., was born in Saint Louis December 18, 1803, married Louise Chenie in 1824, and died near Jonesburgh, Missouri, in July, 1887. He was also concerned in the fur trade, and served as Mayor of Saint Louis from 1844 to 1846. Consult Stella M. Drumm, "Bernard Pratte," *Dictionary of American Biography*, XV, 180-81; Frederic L. Billon, *Annals of St. Louis, 1764-1804*, 466; Billon, *Annals of St. Louis, 1804-1821*, 181-82; J. Thomas Scharf, *History of St. Louis*, I, 196, 674.

³ Paul Liguest Chouteau was born at Saint Louis October 30, 1792, and died October 16, 1851. He was the third son (fourth child) of Pierre Chouteau and Pelagie Kiercereau. He was active all of his life either as an Indian Agent or in trading in partnership with his elder brother, Auguste Pierre Chouteau, and his cousin Pierre Melicourt Papin. He married twice: (1) Constance Dubreuil, February 11, 1813; (2) Aurora Hay, 1830. There is some uncertainty as to the number of his children. Billon (*Annals of St. Louis, 1804-1821*, 170, 171) gives them as Auguste L. (April 22, 1815), Alexander (February 10, 1818), Charles Louis (March 7, 1819), Charles Liguest (1821). Beckwith (*Creoles of St. Louis*, 60-61) adds one more name: Cyprien Liguest (September 31, 1823); for all of these except Charles Louis he gives Liguest as the middle name. Neither Billon nor Beckwith mentions Edward L. Chouteau, but the probate record for the estate of the latter makes clear that at the time Edward made his will (1853) he and Auguste L. were the sole surviving children of Paul Liguest Chouteau. The Major Chouteau here mentioned has sometimes been mistaken for his father, Major Pierre Chouteau; Edward L. Chouteau, introduced in the next chapter, was without question the son of Paul and grandson of Pierre.

⁴ *Chasseur* was the word Tixier used, but it is not correct. The French trader lived at least part of the year in the Indian village, but he never hunted in the direct sense of the word as did the American hunters.

⁵ He meant by this, of course, the "school of experience."

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the Major's suggestion immediately; it allowed me to realize my greatest desire. I was going to live among the redskins in the manner of the redskins! I was especially fascinated by the hope of attending this long itinerant hunt, which will be described later. To live as a nomadic savage for almost three months! That was enough to excite so young a head as mine. I thanked the Major heartily and asked him for the necessary information.

After dinner Captain Casey introduced us to the ladies. We talked, played the piano, and sang, and the evening ended with tea and the clever game of "Old Maid," represented by the queen of diamonds. This game is as difficult as lotto, and as amusing as the game of goose revived from the Greeks.

Although our ladies were Saint Louis Creoles, they were at heart more American than those of New Orleans. In the last twenty years Saint Louis has become quite an American city, and the Creoles who live there have almost forgotten their mother tongue. Whatever M. Gaillardet's diary may say, the French language and customs are gradually disappearing in the United States.⁶ The French find a friendly feeling only among the old Creoles. The young ladies have borrowed from the Americans their spirit of controversy and discussion. I had to sustain many assaults. One evening in particular one of our pretty passengers undertook to convert me to American ideas, but she found an ill-disposed proselyte. My beautiful opponent was heatedly discussing a delicate point; she was speaking of showing one's feelings, and supported the opinion that a man should never show his feelings on his features.

⁶ Théodore Frédéric Gaillardet (April 7, 1808—August 13, 1882), journalist, dramatist, essayist, went to Louisiana with two brothers in 1837. He traveled in Cuba and Texas and lived for a time in New Orleans; during this time he contributed to *La Presse* and *Le Journal des Débats* of Paris. The diary to which Tixier refers is evidently the series of articles which he contributed to the *Le Journal des Débats* in 1839. In New York he bought the *Courrier des États-Unis* (January, 1840) and edited it until his return to France in 1848. His book, *L'Aristocratie en Amérique*, was published in 1883. Frank Monaghan, "Gaillardet," *Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 90-91.

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"In this," she said, "the Americans are greatly superior to the French; cheerful or sad, happy or unhappy, they always keep the same expression on their faces; through the greatest emotions their eyes remain dry. An American returning home after a long trip will be as calm and cold as if he had left it the preceding day, and will talk of business before inquiring about his children." I was greatly surprised to hear a girl approve of this conduct, but I merely asked her if such a great difference in expression was not due to a great difference in sensitiveness—if the man who always restrains the outbursts of his heart is not acting continually—and I ended by saying, with as much politeness as I could express, "The man who never obeys the impulses of his heart, who compresses within himself that honorable and natural sensitiveness which soothes sorrow and enables him to accomplish great deeds, soon acquires such dryness of heart that indifference, affected at first, soon becomes natural, and selfishness results from it." The Americans do not like the savages, but it is a curious fact that the principles I just mentioned are put to practice by the Indians and form one of the main features of their personalities. Among them this manner is a result of their upbringing, and of the perpetual distrust in which they are forced to live. To remain inscrutable and to conceal all feelings is for them an imperious necessity; in the Americans it is either selfishness or vanity.

In spite of the profound respect I profess for ladies' opinions, I was too patriotic to let my dear France be slandered without defending it to the best of my ability, and in the course of the conversation it was attacked with violence. People attempted to demonstrate that my country had no common sense. I was in a difficult situation. Americans always want to be right and accept no objections. They are particularly stubborn when they assert the superiority of America over all other countries. They will tell you without hesitation that nothing in France equals

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what can be found in the United States. I appeal to the testimony of travelers. It is only through politeness that they show admiration for anything which is not the work of nature or the result of industry. Fenimore Cooper has, in my opinion, described civilized America perfectly in his novel *Eve Effingham*, and this too truthful painter now lives away from the world at Cooper's Town.⁷

The second day, we arrived early at Baton Rouge, a town built on a hill, the first I saw in America.⁸ At Baton Rouge begin the levees which protect the land down to the mouth of the river. We passed on our left the *Fausse Rivière*, an old bed of the Mississippi which forms with its present bed a loop around a former point that is now an island.⁹ Soon we were sailing between two states, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The third day we arrived in front of Natchez, now a large city, and I thought of the powerful nation of which only a name and memories remain.¹⁰

A few miles above Natchez, we passed the steamboat *Persian*,¹¹ which was taking on wood. Every day, and often twice a day, the steamboats stop for about two hours in order to stock up again in firewood, and it is usually during this stop that the boats left behind get up more steam to take the lead. Therefore, the ones which want to make or sustain a reputation spend

⁷ *Eve Effingham* was the title of the English and French editions of Cooper's *Home as Found*. An English edition was published in 1830, French editions in 1839 and 1840. Consult Robert E. Spiller and Philip C. Blackburn, *A Descriptive Bibliography . . . of Cooper*, 100-101.

⁸ Baton Rouge was first settled around 1720 and was made the capital of Louisiana in 1850.

⁹ The map of the *Plantations on the Mississippi*, 1858 shows False River about twenty-five or thirty miles above Baton Rouge and states that it was cut off from the Mississippi in 1722. Lyell mentioned it in passing (*Second Visit*, II, 143).

¹⁰ For a description of the town of Natchez in 1839, see Buckingham, *The Slave States*, I, 449-58. For the Natchez Indians, see Swanton, *Indian Tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley*, 1-257.

¹¹ "The superior and fast running s b *Persian*, James W. Goslee, master"—*Missouri Republican*, Friday, May 15, 1840.

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as little time as possible getting their wood, which has been piled up ahead of time. Since the boat's crew would be unable to carry on board the thirty or forty cords which are burned every day, the deck passengers, who are not allowed to enter the cabin, are forced to help the sailors carry it.

Farther up we met the steamboat *Prairie*,¹² which was rapidly descending from Saint Louis to New Orleans. It was the last day of this unfortunate ship. At about four in the afternoon, the sky filled with black clouds and a frightful tornado began. Our Captain had foreseen the storm and had strongly moored his ship in a place sheltered by a forest which grew close to the Mississippi. The tornado blew with such violence that it broke the two funnels of the *Persian*, taken by surprise in the middle of the river;¹³ and the *Prairie*, which was in front of Natchez, was sunk.¹⁴ In Natchez the wind tore several houses down, crushing in their fall a great number of people.¹⁵ This news

¹² The *Prairie*, Captain Freleigh, was advertised to leave Saint Louis for New Orleans, Sunday, May 3, at 10 A.M.; on May 4 it was listed among the departures. *Saint Louis New Era*, Friday, May 1, 1840, and Monday, May 4, 1840.

¹³ "... the steamer *Persian* at the mouth of White River had her chimneys carried away and her hurricane deck forward of the cabin. The captain says for a time he thought it would have carried away her cabin or laid the boat on her side."—*Missouri Republican*, Friday, May 15, 1840.

¹⁴ A report of the hurricane was brought to Saint Louis by the *Vandalia* which left New Orleans on May 5 and arrived in Saint Louis on the fourteenth. The storm at Natchez came up on the seventh, rather suddenly, at 2 P.M., and did immense damage at Natchez. "The steamboat *Prairie* of this port, on her downward trip, was lying at the wharf. The gale took off her upper works, hurricane deck, cabin, &c., down to her lower deck. She had on board a number of passengers, reports say 200, but we think this greatly beyond the number, many of whom, it is supposed, were swept overboard and lost. Captain Freleigh, one of the most highly esteemed of the Captains of this port, is reported to have perished, though of this there is not yet complete certainty. The *Prairie* had a very full freight, estimated at near \$30,000; she had also \$50,000 in specie, shipped by the Bank, and \$12,000 belonging to an individual. There was insurance, we understand, on the boat and most of her cargo, except the specie. The *Meteor*, which reached Natchez shortly afterwards, towed the hull of the *Prairie* down to New Orleans."—*Missouri Republican*, Friday, May 15, 1840. A letter from Captain Freleigh to J. G. Bennet of the *New York Herald*, dated May 16, 1840, was published in the Saint Louis *Daily Bulletin* on June 9, 1840.

¹⁵ Newspapers of New Orleans, May, 1840.—TIXIER. [Lyell (*Second Visit*, II, 152) commented on the storm also. Reports of the tornado at Natchez were published in the Saint Louis *Daily Pennant* and the *Daily Bulletin*, May 16, 1840.]

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was brought to Saint Louis by the *Persian*, which, forced to put into port for repairs, arrived in Saint Louis three days after us.¹⁶

We passed easily enough several small boats, steaming up as we did, but a few miles below the junction of the Ohio River we were closely followed by the boat *Ohio Belle*, whose greater speed was well known to us. We fired the engine as much as possible, and, against a five-mile-an-hour current, began to move at a speed of at least twelve miles an hour.

It was a fine race, and I will mention that these races between ships are the most frequent causes of those terrible accidents which happen on the rivers of America. The Americans have little regard for human life, and they always go ahead without worrying whether their boats may blow up. The *Ohio Belle* was obviously gaining on us. Our Captain was urging the stokers and shouted "Fire up!" while striking the funnels. However, we soon saw the mouth of the Ohio¹⁷ and docked in front of Cairo, a great city to be. Our honor was saved; we had arrived before our rival, which continued toward Louisville without stopping.

The planning of Cairo is gigantic. Admirably situated, this city will receive the products from the north and the west by way of the Mississippi; and those from the east by the Ohio River. A company has bought the point which separates the two rivers, and the plan of the city has already been drawn. It can be seen in the northern cities, the streets already provided with names, the buildings designed and engraved; there remain to be found only houses and inhabitants. The buyers have not paid enough attention to a small inconvenience which seemed obvious to us when we passed the city. The water was high, and all the houses already built on the point were in water up to

¹⁶ The *Persian* was listed among arrivals in the *Missouri Republican* of Thursday, May 14, 1840.

¹⁷ Tixier used here the name favored by the American-French, *Belle Rivière*.

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the second floor. This Venetian aspect of Cairo could well have earned for it the name of the queen of the Adriatic.¹⁸

On the banks of the rivers in the United States an infinite number of towns can be seen which might well make one imagine an enormous population, if one did not understand the real meaning of certain words. It is fitting to remind the reader that one never sees hamlets, villages, or even towns in America. Any aggregation of houses is a city, and would rather do without a name than take another designation. This general claim makes the meaning of the word *city* much less precise than anywhere else. It sometimes has the one generally attributed to it; as in the obvious cases of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, etc. But there are other cities which, in order not to be mistaken for villages, are careful to choose a name rendering a mistake impossible, such as, for instance, in Missouri: Harrisonville, Georgetown, Jefferson City, Warrenburg. This hyperbolic ending seems to point out to the traveler that he must say to the inhabitants: "your *city*." In all these small cities there is a central building around which the others are grouped; it is the merchants' exchange;¹⁹ then the store, where every imaginable article is sold, a hotel, and a bakery are the main establishments, sometimes surrounded by two or three small frame houses. This group of houses and whatever generic term is given to it is often called by a weighty name: Sparta, Memphis, Mexico, Paris, London, etc., etc., all great, famous cities whether old or modern. The inhabitants of these proud villages have kept the customs of the big cities; there is in them no local color or originality; they are always the same—hard-working, adventurous, fond of discussion, and absurdly vain. The lowliest farmer would be ashamed of being a villager; he is a planter or a citizen. He always wears a black coat.

¹⁸ For a description of Cairo one month later, see Buckingham, *Eastern and Western States*, III, 79-82.

¹⁹ In the original, *l'exchange ou bourse*.

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America is the land of contrasts. Here the river flows between two edges of primeval forests, inhabited only by wild beasts; there it flows by a city just started in a recently cleared country where the trees which have just been felled still show their stumps in streets along which pass men who have not changed in any respect the clothes and customs of New England.

We were still sailing up, cutting across the current from one point to another to shorten the distance; we often sounded and the high water permitted us frequent short-cuts. One day the lead suddenly showed six feet; we tried a quick change of direction, but the maneuver was poorly executed, the current confined between two islands took us crosswise and made the fore part of the boat run aground on a small point. It was resting on willow branches. The engine was reversed and soon we were out of trouble. The ladies had been very much afraid, and not without reason, for the boiler often blows up in such circumstances.

Above Sainte Genevieve,²⁰ the banks become steeper and covered with enormous rocks, the hills are wooded and generally have a rounded shape; the vertical cliffs have made it easy for the inhabitants to install gunshot factories.²¹

We arrived in Saint Louis on May 12, and, after lunching with Captain Casey, we left the boat.²²

²⁰ In 1935 Sainte Genevieve celebrated its bicentennial. For the history of this place consult Dorrance, *The Survival of French in the Old District of Sainte Genevieve*; Francis J. Yealy, *Sainte Genevieve*; Louis Houck, *History of Missouri*; Houck, *Spanish Régime in Missouri*.

²¹ Early in the nineteenth century a shot tower had been erected at Herculaneum, about halfway between Sainte Genevieve and Saint Louis.

²² The *Missouri Republican* on Tuesday, May 12, 1840, listed the *General Pratte* among the arrivals from New Orleans. Editorially it added: "The *General Pratte* which arrived yesterday from New Orleans, bringing dates to the 3d, reports that the lowlands above New Orleans, not protected by levees, were overflowed. The water was within about 4 inches of high water mark, and the *Prairie* met the rise of the Mississippi some distance above. As this rise is nearly ten feet, there will indubitably be great injury done to the plantations below."

Part II: Missouri

V. MISSOURI

SAIN T LOUIS—AN INTRODUCTION—AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE—
THE MISSOURI—LEXINGTON—INDISCRETION—THE PRAIRIE—
A FARM—INDEPENDENCE—INCREDO LITY—THE SHAWNEE—
THE AMERICAN AGENT—THE PONY—HARRISONVILLE—A
CAPTAIN—THE BIG KENTUCK—URBANITY—HARMONY MI-
SSION—GENERAL DUGLASS—WILD TURKEYS—THE MULE—
TWO OSAGE—THE FRONTIER—AN ADVENTURE ONE NIGHT
—ARRIVAL AT NION-CHOU

WE TOOK lodgings at the house of a M. Viguier, a countryman of ours who keeps a boarding house on Main Street.¹ One can see on this street, across the Market Place, an old house, built like the old Louisiana houses; it is shielded on one side by a wall with loopholes, which protected it twenty-five years ago from the attacks of the Osage who lived close to Saint Louis.² At that time people went to

¹ *The Saint Louis Directory for 1840-41* lists H. F. Viguier as keeping a French boarding-house at 75 S. First Street. In his advertisement in the same volume (p. 82) his first name is given as Henry. In the next issue (1842) his *Pension Française* has become *Hôtel de France* (now at Second and Chestnut streets). Viguier is not listed in previous directories.

² This was possibly the residence of Auguste Chouteau who assisted Pierre La-Clède in the founding of Saint Louis in 1764 and died in 1829 in his eightieth year. His widow, Thérèse Cerré Chouteau, was living there in 1840. In 1841 the following description appeared in Thomas and Wild's *Valley of the Mississippi Illustrated*, 29-30: "The house is 95 feet front by 55 feet deep. The porches are about nine feet wide, and extend along the southern and eastern sides. The rear is ornamented with a handsome portico, leading by a flight of stone steps from the second story into the garden. The front is entered by a flight of half a dozen steps to the lower porch, from the southeast corner of which a flight of stairs ascends to the upper part of the building. The square on which the house stands, was, until recently, surrounded by a high stone wall, having port holes, for the defense of the premises from the 'attacks of the Indians'." For other and earlier descriptions of this house (and of that of Pierre Chouteau) see John F. Darby, *Personal Recollections*, 10-11; Alphonso Wetmore, *Gazetteer of the State of Missouri*, 186-87; Edmund Flagg, *The Far West*, I, 45. A poem by M. C. Field, "The Chouteau House," originally published in the *New Orleans Picayune*, is reprinted by Thomas and Wild; Field wanted the house preserved for its historical interest.

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New Orleans on sailboats. It was a six months trip that one never undertook without writing his will. But times have changed; Saint Louis has become an American city; one can travel in five or six days the 1,221 miles which separate it from New Orleans, and the Osage have been driven beyond the border of the State of Missouri.³

Mr. Edward Chouteau, the Major's son,⁴ took us to two Osage Indians who were in Saint Louis. One of them, a handsome young man twenty-five years old, was painted red; a mane of the same color adorned his scalp lock. He was wrapped up in a wool blanket, and gravely extended his hand when Mr. Chouteau had presented us to him, saying "*Oéh*," which means "good morning," in a very soft voice. The other Osage was sitting under a gallery and was quietly smoking a penny calumet. Another presentation, another "*Oéh*," another shaking of the hand. This man, forty-five years old, was among the Osage who came to France a few years ago, and wore on his chest a bronze medal representing General Lafayette.⁵ Mr. Chouteau told us that this worthy savage, who passed in Paris for an important chieftain, was only a marmiton,⁶ that is to say

³ For a detailed description of Saint Louis in 1838, see "The Journal of Henry B. Miller," edited by T. M. Marshall, *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, VI (1931), 213-87.

⁴ For Edward Chouteau, see n. 3, p. 87, *supra*. He made his will at Saint Louis, September 9, 1853; the will was filed December 14, 1853. His only family consisted of three half-breed children: Louis L. Chouteau, Louise, and Sophia "which I had by Rosalie Capitaine, an Indian woman of the Osage nation of Indians." To each of them he left \$133 per annum for life. *The Baptismal Records of the Osage Nation* (Typescript, Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis) lists Louis Farramond (*sic*) Chouteau, b. February 10, 1838; Marie Louise, b. September 15, 1839; and Sophia, b. March 4, 1842.

⁵ For this visit, see the contemporary accounts: *Six Indiens Rouges de la Tribu des Grands Osages*, and Paul Vissier, *Histoire de la Tribu des Osages*. An excellent brief account of this visit, which makes use of these two sources and others, is that of Grant Foreman, "Our Indian Ambassadors to Europe," *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, V (February, 1928), 109-28.

⁶ Throughout this translation we have retained the French term *marmiton* because the English equivalent *scullion*, or *cook*, does not clearly convey the meaning of the Indian term. The *marmiton* was apparently a cook but he was also a herald or

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not even a warrior in his own nation but a cook for the braves. Yet this old Osage bears the pretentious out-of-place name of Nika-ouassa-tanga, Big Soldier.⁷ He talked at great length about our country and our compatriots. Mr. Edward, who translated his speech, told us that Big Soldier was very glad to see Frenchmen. He had been astonished by what he had seen in our country, and remembered with particular pleasure that he had married three times there. He complained bitterly then of the person who had taken him to France. When they had sailed back, his own money and luggage and that of his countrymen had been seized to pay the debts contracted in their name.⁸

All the Osage who went to Paris were dead except for Big Soldier and one of the two women.⁹

The old marmiton spoke with great fluency in a pleasantly modulated but accentuated language; he had Mr. Edward say to us that our visit would greatly please the Osage, who were very devoted to our compatriots, and that all the warriors in the nation would come to visit us, and receive us in their lodges during the hunting season. He then complained of the vexations that the American Government inflicted upon his people by driving them farther away all the time, and by paying poor-

town-crier. Compare later passages in this volume. For a brief comment on this subject, see Foreman, "Our Indian Ambassadors," 127 and n. 59.

⁷ Foreman, *op. cit.*, 115, gives Marcharthahtoongah as this man's Indian name, and states that in 1827 he was forty-five years old. If this is correct, Big Soldier was fifty-eight when Tixier met him. His age is disputed, for when J. M. Stanley painted his picture at the Council held at Tablequah in June, 1843, he stated that Big Soldier was then about seventy years old and wore the medal presented to him by Lafayette. He died in the summer of 1844. Big Soldier, or Ne-ha-wa-she-tun-ga, according to Richard Peters (*Treaties between the United States and the Indian Tribes*, 270), was one of the warriors of the Great Osage to sign the Treaty of August 10, 1825.

⁸ For a discussion of this, see Foreman, *op. cit.*, 120 ff., and n. 29.

⁹ In 1835 Little Chief and Myhangah (one of the women) were still alive. Foreman, *op. cit.*, 126-27. An account of Mo-hon-go, or Myhangah, can be found, with a portrait of her and her child, in McKenney and Hall, *The Indian Tribes of North America*, III, 44-49.

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ly for the lands which were bought from them. He spoke of General Lafayette in affectionate terms.

We promptly ordered all we needed for our trip across the prairie and took particular care in choosing a safe steamboat, for navigation on the Missouri River is very dangerous. We considered the *United States Mail*¹⁰ which went only as far as Lexington. Although the Mississippi was very high, the very low water of the Missouri did not allow it to go any farther.

We were very sorry that the *Shawnee*,¹¹ a steamboat of the Fur Company, had left a few days ago for the Yellowstone; this boat would have taken us to Independence or Westport easily, and would have thus spared us a long journey on land. The Company would have been very willing to allow us to go as far as that on their boat, but, if it had been a matter of going to the Yellowstone, it would have refused permission for fear of furnishing in this way precise information of the commercial resources of this part of the land.

The Chouteau family gave us letters of introduction to all the settlers established on the route we were going to follow, and to the trader¹² among the Osage, Mr. Papin, who for twenty-five years had been residing with this nation.

We soon had a complete outfit of harness and weapons. We left our trunks in Saint Louis, got on board the *Mail* on May 15

¹⁰ "Le *United States Mail* (*Courrier des États*)," Tixier wrote it. "The splendid and fast running steam boat *Mail*, T. J. Halderman master, will leave for the above river [Missouri] this day, 14th inst. at 10 A.M. For freight or passage apply on board or to E. & A. Tracy or Jonas Newman Ag'ts."—*Missouri Republican*, May 14, 1840. A paragraph in the *Republican* on May 21 praised the *Mail* for the swiftness of her trip to Lexington and return.

¹¹ "The new and superior s b *Shawnee*, Capt J. W. Keiser," was announced to leave for Independence on Monday, May 11 (*Missouri Republican*, May 11, 1840). From the newspaper notice, the boat does not appear to belong to the American Fur Company or to be going to the Yellowstone. Phil E. Chappell, "Missouri River Steam-boats," *Kansas Historical Collections*, IX (1905-06), 295-316, in a list for 1841-42 included the "*Shawnee*. Clifford master. A fur-trade boat."

¹² The word in the original is *traiteur*, to which Tixier adds this note: "An agent of the fur company in a nation of redskins."

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in the evening, and we sailed well provided with everything except horses, which we were to buy in Independence or, rather, in Westport, the market where the traders who follow the Santa Fe trail buy and sell their lead or pack horses.

We awoke the next day on the Missouri River. The navigation is very dangerous on this river. Its muddy water crusts the boilers so quickly that it is necessary to clean them every day for fear of an accident. The bottom of the river is formed of sand banks so unstable that it is impossible to know it well; for this reason we ran aground so deeply that we could go neither forward nor backward. We disengaged the boat by driving in front of it big piles which had been prepared in advance. With the help of these we raised the boat by means of tackles. The engine running at full speed gained a few feet for us; after renewing these attempts several times, we finally reached deeper water, but, before venturing any farther, the Captain sent a pilot in a small boat to sound ahead of us, and we were saved from any more sand banks.

The banks of this tributary, wide enough to be compared with any large river in Europe, had nothing remarkable about them. There was, as on the Mississippi, a profusion of high hills, rounded and well wooded, and of picturesque cliffs where red cedars grew; these were more or less recently cleared ground, one with a well-appointed house and very productive corn fields, another with only a log cabin surrounded by dead trees still standing, among which were growing the usual corn, the pumpkin with its wide leaves, and water melons.¹⁸

We were favored with beautiful moonlight. One night, however, a thick fog forced us to cast anchor and stay where we were. It was more prudent to lose some time than to risk being sunk by a snag or running aground on quicksand. Our boat

¹⁸ This is a generalized description—not a faithful report of what Tixier saw on the Missouri River in mid-May!

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was going very fast and easily passed the other steamboats we encountered. We arrived at Lexington three days after our departure from Saint Louis. We had made three hundred and eleven miles, and one hour after its arrival the *Mail* had disposed of its cargo and was sailing towards the Mississippi.

Lexington is located on a hill close to the Missouri River. It is a city of about one hundred and twenty houses built on grounds which could easily contain a thousand more. Space is not scarce and everyone has elbow-room.¹⁴ A stage coach leaves for Independence three times a week. It had left a few hours before we came. We hired a wagon for the next day and came back to get our luggage, which we had left on the river front in the care of a little boy who, instead of watching it, helped a group of little Negro boys try our saddles and guns. The bigger ones were estimating the value of our things without any restraint, and when we came near them they asked if their appraisal was correct.

We took a room with two beds and began our apprenticeships as free travelers. We had for supper a roast of salt pork and small round cakes of a heavy, poorly baked dough which doubtless are called "biscuits," by way of a joke, cornbread, and, to drink, water and tea ad libitum. At five o'clock in the morning we were on our way to Independence.

We were so uncomfortable in our wagon that we walked most of the way. In the stretches of woods which border on brooks, there are many turtledoves, rabbits, and quail,¹⁵ and on the prairie a great many prairie hens.¹⁶ We thereby secured some game for our next meal. When we arrived for our dinner

¹⁴ Lexington was laid out in 1822 and made the county seat. Consult William Young, *History of Lafayette County, Missouri*, I, 309-324.

¹⁵ Tixier wrote "perdrix (ortix)." Read, *Louisiana-French*, 56, says that this is the bird called partridge in the South and quail in the northeastern and central states.

¹⁶ *Gelinottes* in the original. He probably means the prairie hen or chicken of which all the travelers speak.

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at the farmhouse agreed upon beforehand, our hostess did not want to cook our rabbits, for in this season, as she said, they have large worms in their heads, which makes their flesh unwholesome. We spent the night in a well-kept farm about twelve miles from Independence.¹⁷ We arrived just in time, for our luggage had scarcely been brought in before an awful downpour occurred, such rain as I had never seen before, but to which I was later to be exposed upon many occasions without an umbrella. When the storm was over the farm yard was overrun in all directions by goatsuckers, at which we shot for the amusement of it.

Like all the western settlers, our host came from the eastern states. He was born in Ohio, which he had left twelve years before. He invited us to spend a few days on his farm to hunt deer and wild turkeys. It was a tempting offer, but the Osage were soon going to leave for bison hunting, and we departed very early. Before arriving at Independence we crossed very deep ravines; twenty times we escaped breaking our necks on our wagon, but I remained unconcerned by such small dangers while admiring the beauties around me, although I was frequently brought back to a precise realization of my position when a violent jerk threw me to the bottom of the carriage.

We stopped at the best hotel in Independence. We were led to a poorly enclosed dormitory where eight large beds were strewn about so as to accommodate sixteen travelers. We chose ours among the remaining vacant ones, and began to complete our accommodations.¹⁸

In my turn, for all of us had to go through it, I was ques-

¹⁷ Cf. Charles Joseph Latrobe's account of a settler's establishment a few miles east of Independence in 1832 (*The Rambler in North America*, I, 134-39).

¹⁸ For a sketch of Independence, laid out in 1827, see *The History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 633-67. Washington Irving stopped at the Globe Hotel, September 26, 1832 (*Journals*, III, 116). Latrobe (*The Rambler*, I, 140) apparently stopped at "Captain Warner's Hotel." He did not find it a very attractive town in 1832 (*ibid.*, I, 128), nor did John T. Irving the next year (*Indian Sketches*, 11).

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tioned by our host. He asked me many questions about our intentions and the reasons for our trip. It was impossible for me to make him realize that we just wanted to visit the Osage to complete our education and for the pleasure of it. He was sure that we were hiding our real purposes. In this country where everybody is speculating, people see speculation everywhere. I left the good man with his preconceived ideas, which he did not give up, and inquired about the means of obtaining horses. We had great difficulty in getting them. It was, we were told, a season when horses were scarce and expensive, for the traders of the Santa Fe trail had just left; everyone spoke ill of the other fellow's horses; they wanted to take advantage of us. We were obliged to go to Westport¹⁹ to make our purchases. No horses were there, either. We went as far as the Shawnee,²⁰ who sold us a pony, but they had to run after him for a long time on the prairie where he lived in freedom before they roped him and brought him in; and when he was brought to us and paid for, the matter was not yet ended: we still had to obtain from the Agent of the American Government a ratification of the deal we had made with the savages. This is a wise precaution, for the redskins, who are forbidden to sell anything and from whom one cannot buy anything without the permission of the Agent, would have no scruples whatsoever against stealing a horse back once it had been sold, if the authentic deed written by this magistrate did not give the buyer recourse against them.

The Government Agent, whose authority rests upon a detachment of frontier dragoons, is an arbitrator between the whites and the Indians. In trade and police cases he receives the complaints of both sides, he makes inquiries and renders justice to each. It is his duty also to turn in to the Government a state-

¹⁹ Westport was founded in 1833. For its early history, consult Gilbert J. Garaghan, S. J., *Catholic Beginnings in Kansas City, Missouri*.

²⁰ There was then a Shawnee reservation in Johnson County, Kansas.

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ment of the depredations committed every year by the savages, and to give an indemnity in cash to the frontier inhabitants who were the victims of this plundering.

A traveler who goes through the lands of an Indian tribe with horses or merchandise must obtain, for his own safety, from the Agent in this nation a safe conduct in which the nature and the value of his merchandise and the number and description of his horses are indicated. This title enables him to recover his property if the savages steal it during the night, a thing which sometimes happens. If he had not taken care to provide himself with a safe conduct, he could not support his claim with any valuable proof, and would risk having his claim disregarded.

We came back to Independence with our unruly pony and bought for a rather high price five more horses which suited our purpose very well.²¹

They were strong animals, and two could have been considered quite fine. We put them in a common stock and drew lots. The Shawnee pony fell to me and I took it with pleasure, for I knew the *cha-ouanon*²² horses to be fast and tireless. We all had good animals for riding, and we had two more horses for our packs.

We left Independence on May 20 and without a guide set out through the prairie. We had a forty-five mile ride before reaching Harrisonville. My horse made a thousand difficulties before letting me mount him. He stiffened and jumped as soon as my foot touched the stirrup. I had to give up this way of mounting. Twice I jumped in the saddle, but my beast reared and I had to do it again. After two fruitless attempts I succeeded in remaining on his back, and my energetic use of the spurs

²¹ Cf. Latrobe, *op. cit.*, I, 140-42, for an amusing description of bargaining for a horse.

²² The real name of the Shawnee.—TIXIER. [In this volume, however, the standard spelling *Shawnee* will be followed.]

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brought the stubborn animal to the realization of his duties. As soon as he was convinced of the moral superiority that the long rowels of the *racachas*²³ give the rider, he changed his attitude and followed in line according to the habit of prairie horses. In spite of all my efforts I could not succeed that day in having my pony walk abreast of another horse.

A storm was brewing. Large drops of rain made us wrap ourselves in the blankets strapped around our waists, but the coats did not protect us very long from the heavy downpour; the wind unfolded them constantly and we soon were completely drenched. We were not able to find any shelter other than a few trees, which the thunder made too dangerous. Our horses were walking, their heads bent low without bothering about the rain, the flashes of lightning, or the claps of thunder which followed one another with a dreadful noise.

We were riding sometimes through a narrow prairie, sometimes through a wide wooded point. A point is a narrow stretch of wood along a stream of water.²⁴ But as we progressed the prairie became wider and the woods became scarcer and thinner. The grass, low and thick, covered a series of small wooded hills and plains crossed by many brooks flowing between two lines of trees, along the edge of which were small farms. On the plains we encountered small troops of five or six deer, prairie hens, woodcocks with long tails which are called *papabottes*²⁵ in Louisiana. In the woods huge flocks of parrots flew away as we approached, uttering discordant cries.²⁶

We stopped for an hour near a spring and had our dinner at

²³ Spanish spurs.—TIXIER. [For a discussion of the origin of this word, see Read, *Louisiana-French*, 146-49.]

²⁴ For an explanation of Tixier's use of this word, see n. 10, Part I, Chapter II, *supra*.

²⁵ According to Read (*Louisiana-French*, 55), the *papabot[t]e* is the upland plover or bartramian sandpiper.

²⁶ For a discussion, with citations from a number of travelers, see "Paroquets in Missouri," *Missouri Historical Review*, XXXI (January, 1937), 181-84.

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about twelve. After this meal we met two farmers, who rode along with us, and who, like our host at Independence, imagined a commercial aim in our trip concealed under the appearances of an absurd curiosity.

At nightfall we arrived at the foot of a wooded hill on the top of which is Harrisonville.²⁷ While crossing the forest I heard for the first time the sad calls of the whip-poor-will. We dismounted after giving a letter of introduction to the Captain . . . I must say, by the way, that all Americans, especially those in the west, have some military title, the least of which is that of captain. Do you wish to call a passerby whom you do not know at all? Cry out, "O, Captain!" I wager that he will answer you.

We were given hospitality and assigned beds in a dormitory built on the same lines as those we have already mentioned. There were several Americans whose prattling prevented us from sleeping for over an hour. These gentlemen, doubtless believing we did not understand their language, were making very amusing remarks about us. However, getting tired of this endless talking, we begged them in good English to let us go to sleep. They believed then that we knew only a few words of English and told us so rather crudely. James then made a speech long enough to change their opinion. Finally they became silent.

We paid a high price on leaving for the hospitality we had been given or, rather, that we had received. We were followed by a handsome beagle, which we named Harrison to commemorate the place where he had fallen into our hands. The partisans of the conqueror of Tippecanoe were quite shocked when they heard us give a poor dog the name of their candidate for

²⁷ Harrisonville was located in 1835 as the county seat for the then Van Buren County. It was named for Albert G. Harrison, member-elect of the U. S. House of Representatives. Consult Allen Glenn, *History of Cass County, Missouri*, 123-27. For a contemporary account of Van Buren County, see Wetmore, *op. cit.*, 223-25.

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the presidency, and yet there was no political allusion in the name we had chosen.

We were traveling without a guide in a country where the woods and the houses gradually became scarcer, and where the prairie seemed to widen constantly in front of us. According to the instructions given us, we were following a narrow path; we often hesitated when it forked. Our itinerary was west by south, and we always took this direction.²⁸

The farms are very far from one another. They consist of a house, quite small and divided into two rooms, or rather, two houses joined by a roof, so that it leaves in this interval a third room open on two sides, which is used as a dining-room during the good season. The sheds and the stables are built so as to form a yard enclosed in front by a fence, the entrance of which is a breast-high stairway. All this is built with logs covered with bark. The fences are made of very long pieces of wood piled up and forming projecting and reëntering angles.

The cultivated lands are fenced in likewise. There are no longer such clearings as on the banks of the rivers where trees have to be destroyed; here the prairie alone has to be cleared.

The farms are located near the wooded streams. These woods provide lumber and firewood; water is near at hand. In these remote regions the soil can be cultivated only along running streams. The farther west one goes, the more arid becomes the land, and soon the lands which grow trees, that is to say the points, are the only ones fit for cultivation; the more beautiful the forest is, the richer the ground, but on the prairie one cannot grow anything.

We were to spend the night at the house of a farmer to whom we had a letter, but the sun had set for a long time and we were still riding in the darkness. Our horses were tired and

²⁸ Their course could hardly have been "west by south" if they expected to reach either Colin or the old Harmony Mission, for these places were slightly east of south from Harrisonville.

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everybody knows that the second day of a prolonged horseback ride is very painful for those who are out of practice; we had been going slowly and were starving.

We finally reached the farmhouse at about nine o'clock on a path bristling with stumps which rose three feet above the ground. We obtained shelter and a scanty supper. Our host was a big man who was from Kentucky; he was surrounded by his sons, who called him "Sir." After supper there was nothing we wanted more than to go to bed, but the venerable patriarch was still talking, and, in spite of our hints and frequent looks at the two mattresses placed on the ground, he continued with one of his sons the political discussion which had been started on Harrison and the topics of the day. It would have been very improper to ask for our beds. Although one is paying for hospitality in these settlements, one is not as free as in a hotel. The money given to the host indemnifies him for his expenses, but he can be paid for his polite behavior only by an extreme courtesy. I chose to go to sleep in my chair, following the example of M. Guérin, who snored beautifully. The patriarch brought the evening to an end at eleven, and soon we were recuperating from our fatigue with a long-awaited sleep.

We wanted to leave early the next day to go to the house of a Frenchman named Colin,²⁹ settled for several years on the Osage River three miles below Harmony Mission. We asked for the way to our compatriot's establishment, but the big Kentuckian³⁰ assured us that he did not know any farmer by that name. He advised us to go directly to old Farmer Allen at Har-

²⁹ They did find him on the way back: see p. 272. The first actual settler in Blue Mound Township (Vernon County) was "Peter Collen (pronounced Colly), a Frenchman" who, in 1836 or 1837 located on the south bank of the Osage at the site of Collen's Ford, also known as the Rapids de Kaw (*The History of Vernon County, Missouri*, 541). Colin's farm was about three and one-half miles southeast of Harmony Mission and about two and one-half southeast of the present town of Papinsville (W. O. Atkeson, *History of Bates County, Missouri*, 284).

³⁰ Tixier wrote it Kentok.

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mony Mission. We had only eighteen miles to cover, and we arrived there at about two o'clock. New inquiries concerning Colin were absolutely fruitless.

The buildings of Harmony, the former property of those missionaries who were to convert the Osage Indians, are crumbling to ruins.³¹ A huge orchard, no longer attended to, yields whatever it can. Allen gave us a decent meal, the menu of which was the same as the preceding ones. Bread had been absolutely out of the question since our landing at Lexington.

On leaving the Mission we crossed the Osage River, about a hundred feet wide, on a ferry belonging to Allen. If our dinner had not been expensive, our crossing was quite high. We had to pay twenty-five cents for each horse, that is to say, a piaster and a half. We had to climb the steep, slippery banks of the river, and our horses had to display all the strength of their legs. After crossing the point, we had to go three miles through a flooded prairie. Finally, after a second ride of seventeen miles, we stopped at General Duglass' house, where we were to stay two days, to give our horses some rest and take a pack mule which Mr. Edward Chouteau had promised to lend to us.³²

General Duglass is an excellent, very peace-loving man. He had never been in the army, yet his rank is very high in the militia of Van Buren county.³³ This militia is ready to defend the frontier against incursions of the Indians, and, by the way, has

³¹ Harmony Mission, founded in 1821 by the United Foreign Missionary Society and abandoned in 1836 or 1837, was located on the Marais des Cygnes (Osage) River about six miles above its junction with the Little Osage and some three or four miles above the present town of Papinsville. For glimpses of it, see Thomas James, *Three Years Among the Indians and Mexicans*, edited by Walter B. Douglas, 184 ff.; Irving, *Journals*, III, 120-21; Latrobe, *Rambler*, I, 154-55; Cortambert, *Voyage aux pays des Osages*, 23 ff. Accounts of some value will be found in *The History of Vernon County, Missouri*, 144-51, and in Atkeson, *History of Bates County*, 50-73.

³² George Douglas settled on the north side of the Marmaton, "at the old Indian ford," in May, 1834 (about one mile northeast of Deerfield). Consult *The History of Vernon County*, 154-56, 517. "Duglass" is merely Tixier's rendering of the name.

³³ The present Cass, Bates, and Vernon Counties, in the western tier, were all part of Van Buren County. For description, see n. 27, *supra*.

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as many officers as soldiers. In this country a captain takes the title of general, a sergeant that of captain; everybody boasts of his democratic feelings, but everyone has a distinctive title; a mere laborer wishes to be a gentleman. Such usages are spread all over the United States. I know in New Orleans a distinguished officer of the French navy who does not use the title of his grade because everybody is called, rightly or wrongly, captain, colonel, etc.

Our host has two boarders in his house. They were born in the eastern states, and they wished to spend one year or so in Missouri. One of them, by way of occupying his spare time, was beginning the education of Mr. Duglass' children; the other one was interested only in hunting. They were treated as members of the family. Farmers like to take in, for a small amount of money, such boarders whose company is precious in isolated settlements.

The farm is large and beautiful, the house is well kept. The fields, fertile and carefully cultivated, are enclosed by high fences. A large herd of cattle, led by a very handsome Scottish bull, grazes on the prairie along with fine brood mares. A magnificent stallion, an offspring of the famous Sir Archer, and a stallion donkey, Master Jack, bring a good income to their owner.

The house is under the supervision of Mrs. Duglass, whose remarkable activity sees to every detail and takes care of everything. She is the one who blows the long tin horn which calls the workmen back to the farm when dinner-time has come.

The courtyard is watched by six beautiful greyhounds and two strong beagles, which give their master the pleasure of profitable hunting, for, besides the furs which Duglass prepares and sells for a good price, he pays his taxes with the premium of one piaster per skin which the county grants for every wolfskin.

The day following our arrival, while my companions were

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inquiring about the mule and the two guides who were to take us to the Osage capital, I set out to hunt wild turkeys, very common in that point which borders Marmiton Creek,³⁴ along which the farms of Duglass and Chouteau are located. I walked deep into the wood and, after crossing a large marsh, I saw fresh tracks of turkeys in the mud. They were going in all directions, and for a long time I had been following these complicated tracks without reaching my birds, when suddenly, on entering a clearing, I heard a muffled sound which attracted my attention, and saw, surrounded by seven or eight females of the species, a handsome cock spreading his tail and flapping his wings against the log on which he was perching. I approached with caution and fired my gun; the poor cock fell among his frightened court. I ran to them as fast as I could and fired my second shot at the fugitives. I put my two heavy victims on my back, and returned with this trophy after a two-hour walk. But there is no pleasure without sorrow. When climbing over a fence I fell and broke the wooden part of my gun. This accident lessened my joy a great deal. I found, however, that near Nion-Chou a gunsmith was kept by the American Government to repair the weapons of the Osage. I made a temporary repair which enabled me to go hunting the next morning. My companions wanted to shoot turkeys as I had done, and I took them where I had found mine the preceding day.

The ground was covered with tracks left by wild beasts. One can hardly imagine how numerous they are in these points. Turkeys, ducks, rabbits, raccoons, foxes, and deer abound. One often sees on farms tame deer which are quite friendly and go about as they wish. The dogs know them well and never hunt

³⁴ In the Osage language "*Lapânie*."—TIXIER. [Marmiton Creek (now incorrectly spelled *Marmaton*) rises in Allen County, Kansas, flows east forty-five miles to the state line; east fourteen miles and northeast fourteen miles to enter the Little Osage River in the northern part of Vernon County. H. C. Beckman, *Water Resources of Missouri*, 375.]



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them; furthermore, they never go after them when they find them in the woods.

On our return we ate the cock killed the preceding day. The feathers of this bird are very colorful, although less beautiful than those of the turkeys of Honduras Bay. Its flesh was white, savory, and seemed all the better to us because we had not had any fresh meat since we had left the Missouri.

The two half-breeds who were to be our guides came to get us the morning of the third day, bringing a fine Mexican mule with a tumor on its back, which must have been very painful, for when we tried to put a packsaddle on, it began to prance, to rear, and to show its teeth. In spite of its threats M. Guérin seized its nostrils and let himself be lifted up. The mule was prancing with such energy that the brave aggressor was thrown on his back a few feet from his opponent. Duglass roped the mule and tied it to a tree; we were then able to saddle and load our beast, which was still casting frightened looks at us.

One of the half-breeds was riding a wild horse he wanted to train. This wretched animal was the cause of a delay which gave us much trouble. We passed in front of Mr. Chouteau's farm³⁵ where we received the compliments of two Osage chieftains—Chonkêh (The Wolf) and Kahikêhchinka (Little Chief),³⁶ inseparable friends whom we found again later on the prairie. These braves invited us to come and live in their lodges during the hunt. Soon, after passing small hills where a few stunted oak trees were growing, we were on the open prai-

³⁵ From Tixier's description, the farm of Edward Chouteau was also on the north side of the Marmaton, west of that of Douglas, and within a mile or two of the state line. *The History of Vernon County* (564) states that "Ed. and Charley Chouteau" had a store (after 1840 or 1845) in the northeast corner of Coal Township (Vernon County) on the Marmaton; that is, very close to Douglas! This history is not notably reliable.

³⁶ Little Chief (Kishagashugah) was thirty-six years old when he made the trip to France in 1827. In 1833 and 1835 he participated in treaty conferences at Fort Gibson. Cf. Foreman, "Our Indian Ambassadors," 114, 121, 126-27.

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rie. One mile beyond these hills we passed a line traced with a plough—it was the border. We were on the lands of the Osage.

A column of white smoke arose at the horizon; we had been riding for an hour, and yet the smoke seemed always at the same distance. A few moments later we indistinctly perceived a troop of horsemen; when we were near them we recognized three savages leading a herd of cattle, which they wished to leave with American farmers during the hunting season. A Canadian, André, came back to his settlement with them; this man gave us information on our itinerary, and told us that the column of smoke was produced by the burning of the tall grass which the camp fire, beside which he and his companions spent the night, had set ablaze.

We had just gone through a rocky region strewn with boulders, with numerous hills scattered with rolling stones, and our worn horses slowed down their pace. The half-breed with the new horse had galloped a great deal to tire it into submission; he declared he could not go any further and, in spite of the long distance we still had to travel, we stopped beside a spring in a wood, where we found delicious strawberries. The first course of our dinner was a magnificent turkey roasted joint after joint on live coals in the Osage style, and our dessert was fragrant wild strawberries. Water from our spring provided the drink for this primitive meal.

We rode on until sunset, and, as in this country the night falls suddenly with hardly any twilight, we had to think of camping immediately in spite of the fifteen miles we still had to cover before reaching Nion-Chou. We chose a spot where the grass was high and thick; our horses were unsaddled, hobbled,³⁷ and released on the prairie with a long loose-end rope added to the leading rein of their halters. We thought then of making a

³⁷ The original word, *enférgez*, is an American usage; see Clapin, *op. cit.*, 137, and Dorrance, *op. cit.*, 73.

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fire; dry branches and dead wood gave us the material for a magnificent, clear blaze.

We placed our horse blankets around the fire. Our saddles under our heads served as pillows. Wrapped in our blankets, we smoked while warming ourselves, for the air was cold and the dew heavy. The two half-breeds took up watch over the bivouac and the horses, and we laid ourselves upon our thin mattresses without any supper.

The fire coloring the already red faces of our watchers a brighter color, my companions stretched out around the fire; the horses resting in the half-light in the background produced a very picturesque composition, and the impressive silence of the night on the prairie, broken now and then by the howling of a wolf or the odd cry of an *ouararong*, added to the effect of this scene.

Our half-breeds went to sleep, and, the next morning, of all our horses my good Cha-oua-non was the only one left. We had to go and look for the others on the prairie; after a three-hour search we found James's horse and the two pack horses. We held counsel. It was agreed that we would hunt around the camp to provide for some sort of lunch, and that two of us, accompanied by one half-breed who had just found his untrained horse, would go to Mr. Papin and ask him for help. Our hunt was fruitless; James and I set out for Nion-Chou with a guide and the pack horses.

After riding through fifteen miles of arid prairie, we arrived at a stream near which we found the remnants of former Osage houses. Farther on the forest became magnificent and the land very fertile; a beaten track led us to a ford of the Nion-Chou [Neosho] River, and a quarter of a mile farther we met an inhabitant who greeted us with "*Oéh!*" He pointed out to us a path which led directly to the lodges. We entered the wood again, and when we came out of it we could see the huts of the "village that touches the sky."

VI. NION-CHOU

HOUSES—TRADING—FORTS—FLATBOATS—ARIKARA—TRADERS—HALF-BREEDS—HISTORY OF THE OSAGE—THE PAWNEE—THE KANSA—VISITS—TOBACCO—THE PRAYER OF THE PIPE—FEAST—HOSPITALITY—OSAGE MEN AND WOMEN—COSTUMES—MOSQUITOES—HUNTS—THE OSAGE AT NANIOMPA—DISCUSSIONS—OLD WHITE HAIR—THE HEAD CHIEF—PARTISANS—LAND—FASTING—OUAKANTAKUS—LANGUAGE—THE CHIEF OF THE LITTLE OSAGE—HANDSOME BIRD—RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OSAGE AND THE COMANCHE—THE GLASS EYE—A BLIND INDIAN—WARNING—CACHES—COOLNESS OF AN OSAGE—DEPARTURE

I HAVE left fifty miles of uninhabited prairie between civilized men and me, and the only vestige of civilization I see is a log cabin built at one end of the village. I salute you unsophisticated men who go farther into solitude as civilization approaches you. I salute you who still know the holy laws of hospitality.

We were walking through the village between groups of men nonchalantly lying on thin blankets spread on the ground; not one look, not a sign of surprise on these impassive faces. The children went on playing without turning their heads in our direction. The women, although as much the daughters of Eve as white girls, did not come out of their lodges to watch us as we passed.

Far from imitating this indifferent attitude of the savages, I looked with interest at the graceful postures of the men and the primitive elegance of their houses. Nion-Chou is composed of about thirty roomy huts irregularly laid out.¹ The smaller ones,

¹ See notes 27 and 28, pp. 126, 127, *infra*.

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which are less numerous, are built in the shape of a cone and their tops have a narrow opening to release the smoke. The single opening, closed by a buffalo skin or a reed mat lowered during the night, looks out toward the east. The larger ones, from forty to fifty feet long, from fifteen to eighteen feet high, and about twenty feet wide, are shaped as parallelograms, on top of which is a semi-cylindrical roof with two openings, one at each end, corresponding to the location of the fires inside. These huts are entered through two doors on the southern part of the two sides, which always correspond to the east and the west. Lengthwise the cabins are always parallel to the meridian.²

Both large and small are built of the same materials. Coarse planks and wide pieces of bark make up the walls as high as five or six feet; mats of reed and buffalo skins cover the roof and overlap the walls to keep out the rain.

After examining the huts, we went to Mr. Papin's house. James gave him our letter of introduction, and while he was reading it I noticed that he had one glass eye.³

A Negro came to take our horses, and we entered the log cabin. Mr. Papin told us we were going to lead the life of the Indians in his house. As a matter of fact, inside the house there was a mixture of the furniture of civilized countries and things used by the redskins: two beds, a few mats, three or four chairs, wooden plates, spoons or *mikouëns*,⁴ two tables, leather bags, a

² Cf. Elliott Coues, ed., *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike*, II, 528-29.

³ Pierre Melicourt Papin, the fourth son of Joseph Marie Papin and Marie Louise Chouteau, was born in Saint Louis in 1793 and died there (of cholera?) in July, 1849. He spent the greater part of his life as resident trader with the Osage. There is a tradition that when the Osage were returning from their summer hunt in 1849, they encamped as usual some distance from home and sent messengers ahead for news. These brought information of Papin's death, and the Chief ordered a three-day stay in camp to mourn for their friend. Consult Billon, *Annals of Saint Louis, 1764-1804*, 448; Billon, *Annals of Saint Louis, 1804-1821*, 184; Scharf, *History of St. Louis*, I, 752; Hyde and Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis*, III, 1692.

⁴ Cf. Read, *Louisiana-French*, 96-97.

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painted lithograph representing the Osage in Paris,⁵ weapons, etc., composed the furniture of the kitchen and of the bedroom.

I begged my host to send assistance to our companions immediately. A Nion-Chou scout was sent to Pânie-Tanga, (*the Big Pânie [Pawnee]*), for this is the name of the stream near which we had camped the night before.⁶ Another Osage went to Mr. Duglass to inform him of the loss of our horses, which would have returned to his settlement if they had not been stolen.

Mr. Papin's household is rather numerous. Sophie, a rather pretty half-breed, helps our host to endure this life; already she has given him a son. Ouichinghêh,⁷ her mother, does the cooking. This Indian woman had first married (in the Osage style, of course) a Canadian who brought her to Saint Louis, where she acquired a very thin veneer of the French language and civilization. After the death of her husband she could not go on living in the city, and came back to Nion-Chou, where Chabé-Chinka (Little-Beaver) became her second husband. Sophie was born of the first marriage, and of the second were born Ishta-Ska (White-Eye), his brother, and Miss Angami, who lives in Mr. Papin's house. This charming little Indian girl sometimes helps her mother and more often plays with Mina-Pichêh (Mina-la-méchante), a half-breed of thirteen years.⁸

⁵ Two pictures (though Papin's may have been neither of these) of the Osage will be found in Foreman, "Our Indian Ambassadors;" one of a group of three done at Paris; the other, of the entire six at a theatre in Rouen.

⁶ The U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Scott Sheet, shows a Pawnee Creek flowing north to join the South Fork of Marmaton River about one mile above its junction with the Marmaton. The travelers would have spent the night somewhere in Bourbon County, Kansas, southwest of Fort Scott.

⁷ Ouichinghêh (more properly *Achinga*) is not a name, but merely a word meaning woman (literally third sister? Cf. Francis La Flesche, *A Dictionary of the Osage Language*, 6, 30).

⁸ The *Baptismal Records of the Osage Nation* lists a Sophie as the daughter of Julien Peras and Achingga. She was born in 1822; Auguste Pierre Chouteau was her godfather. I believe Papin's Sophie, however, to be Sophie Mongrain, daughter of Noel Mongrain and mentioned in the Osage treaty of 1825 as one of his ten children (Kappler, *Indian Treaties*, II, 219). The *Baptismal Records* shows that Sophie, daugh-

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There are six men. Robert, the Negro whom we have met, grows corn. This man is very happy; the Osage, who see no difference between a white man and a Negro, a free man and a slave (for in their opinion they are both men), have given him one of their prettiest girls in marriage. Mr. Papin has adopted most of the Osage customs and treats Robert better than white servants are generally treated. The master and the slave are often invited to the same feasts in the huts and both are invited to sit around the same dishes, but the Negro sits behind his master and eats only after him.

Two young half-breeds,⁹ a Canadian, a Mexican, and an Osage take care of the master's thirty horses. The Mexican, Joe, was for a long time prisoner of the Comanche; he succeeded in escaping in an almost miraculous manner on an untamed horse.

The Osage, Bahabêh, is the son of one of this nation's great warriors, killed in a great battle.¹⁰ Twenty times he tried to follow in his father's glorious footsteps, but an adverse fate has

ter of Noel Mongrain, deceased, and Pahushan, was baptized in 1842, M. Giraud, godfather; she was then twenty-five years of age. The same records give Edward, son of Pierre Melicourt Papin and Sophie Mongrain, as born on July 12, 1838, and baptized May 22, 1840, M. Giraud, godfather. For the Mongrain family see n. 20, p. 124, *infra*.

Information about these people remains sketchy. In his will, made July 7, 1849, Papin made a bequest "to Pierre Melicourt Papin son of Mitieshais an Indian woman of the Osage nation" of all the lands he owned in Bates County, Missouri, except one lot in Papinsville which he reserved for a Catholic Church. The boy named was not yet twenty-one years old; Papin also left to him \$3,000 in trust, the interest to be used for his maintenance and education, the principal to be his at the age of twenty-one. Whether these persons were the Edward and Sophie of the *Baptismal Records* is unknown.

In the will Papin declared that "my two slaves to wit: Albert, a mulatto, and Phoebe, a mulatto," shall be freed. What happened to Robert is not known.

⁹ Later in the narrative it becomes clear that these young men were named Julien and Laforce.

¹⁰ The lack of any uniformity of spelling makes it almost impossible to identify the names of Indians. This, however, is probably the Pa-ha-bee mentioned by Boone (W. Julian Fessler, ed., "Captain Nathan Boone's Journal," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, VII [1929], 76). Confirmation appears later in the text. See n. 21, p. 252, *infra*.

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never given him the occasion to show his valor, although neither will nor patience was lacking, for, waiting in ambush during a severely cold winter, his feet froze and he lost the phalanxes of his toes. Poor Bahabêh remained a marmiton.

Some distance away from the houses near the village is a large warehouse, where the goods given to the Osage in exchange for pelts or money are carefully locked up. The importation of whiskey is forbidden, but one can sell them guns, powder, red paint, brightly colored cotton or wool cloth, blankets, axes, glass trinkets, etc.

It is more advantageous for the traders to pay for the pelts in this manner than to give their money's worth in cash; for two cakes of red paint, for instance, which cost twenty or thirty cents at the most, are sold for one piaster in Nion-Chou, and can easily be bartered for a common buffalo robe that can be sold for three or four dollars in Saint Louis. It is, therefore, preferable to trade by barter, since one makes double profit on merchandise. Trading is, consequently, a very lucrative business.

The American Fur Company, whose main office is in Saint Louis, exploits all the red nations that border the United States, and does not fear any competition.¹¹ With its huge capital this Company would be able to make such sacrifices as would soon dispose of it. Moreover, in order to make individual business more difficult, it is their practice never to give any information concerning trade with the redskins. All I know is from what I have seen.

Trading with the savages is much easier now than it was

¹¹ Until he sold out in 1834, John Jacob Astor was the head of this company and its headquarters were in New York. After that date its affairs were directed by Pierre Chouteau, Jr. of Saint Louis. Many members of the Chouteau family and their connections were in this company. No history of this company has been written, although there is much concerning it in Hiram Martin Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*. See Stella M. Drumm's sketch of Pierre Chouteau, Jr. in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and the bibliography given there. The official name at this time was Pierre Chouteau, Jr. and Company.

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twenty years ago. A counter of exchange is established in every nation in the very center of the villages, and the traders live on very good terms with their customers, whose language and customs they usually adopt. Formerly, the Company needed forts with a garrison and artillery to protect its representative and merchandise. It was very dangerous to go far from them, for red warriors constantly ambushed, killed and scalped the lonely passerby.

The inside of a trading post was not always a safe shelter, and the savages knew how to get in to take a few scalps away. One dark night a Sauk¹² climbed through a gun embrasure into a fort containing Osage and Frenchmen. His nation being at war with the Osage, he was careful to touch the ears of all the sleeping people in order not to strike a friend. As soon as he felt the pierced ears, he uttered the death cry, killed, and scalped the Osage, and disappeared before the French had recovered from the surprise caused by such boldness.

River junctions were used by choice to establish these fortified posts. They were convenient locations. Barges, flat-bottom boats, went up the river among the Indian nations to be loaded with precious pelts and to descend again to Saint Louis. The mariners who manned these barges had to be brave and numerous to defend them from the redskins, who after receiving payment did not scruple to take back what they had bartered. The whites were often obliged to drive them off by gunfire. At other times savages hidden in woods near the river attacked the flatboats and attempted to carry away pelts and scalps. A Canadian was wounded in the cheek by a bullet which broke two teeth and remained in his mouth. "Row hard," he said to one of his companions, "here is a quid to give you courage," and he

¹² The Sawks, in French, Saks, are a tribe of the great Sioux nation.—TIXIER.
[For the Sauk Indians, consult Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, II, 471-80, and the references there cited.]

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put the bloody bullet into his hand. The boats manned by such brave men generally returned to the forts. Nowadays steam-boats ply without being attacked the very rivers where these battles took place, but such scenes still occur in the remote parts of the prairies.¹³

It took great courage twenty years ago to go and establish a trading post among a tribe. The Arikara¹⁴ in particular were quite refractory; however, they prepared skins admirably, and the Fur Company had the notion of opening trade with them.

One of Mr. Papin's relatives was entrusted with this perilous mission, and he went with some samples among the Arikara. When he came into their village, the savages wanted to kill him. His life was saved by a half-breed whom he had known formerly and had not seen for a long time.

This man had become one of the most respected chiefs of the nation. He recognized him, took him into his lodge, and saved him for the time being. "If you come out, they will kill you," he said to the trader; "stay in my house; they will not dare harm you while you are my guest." The half-breed tried in vain to have the suppliant smoke a pipe with the Chief—an act that would have saved him; but seeing all his attempts useless, he tried a last and sublime way.

He had brought two powerful chiefs to the side of the unfortunate trader. These three Indians clad themselves as if they were ready to die,¹⁵ and went out with the trader armed to the teeth, ready to fight for their lives; valiantly they began to sing

¹³ *Au Large*, Tixier wrote, and added the note: "They call *Large* the farthest regions of the prairies."

¹⁴ The Arikara live between the Mandan and the Sioux on the borders of Missouri and Iowa, between the Maripa to the north and the Sa-Waw-Caw-Na River to the south; both flow into the Mississippi.—TIXIER. [Consult Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians*, I, 83-86.]

¹⁵ When an Indian has dreamed that he is going to die, or when he dies voluntarily, he puts on his most brilliant attire. He wants his enemies to know that they have killed a great warrior, *un homme comme il faut*, as the Creole traders say.—TIXIER.

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the death song. The Arikara, moved by such devotion, received the trader and traded with him. What noble hearts! What hospitality!¹⁶

Today the frontier traders live happily among the savages, and most of them do not regret having left civilization. If they have to go through some trouble, fear some little hatreds, avoid certain traps, they find on the other hand a calm, quiet life, and enjoy complete freedom of habits and clothes, good appetite and health, and absence of the troublesome laws of etiquette. White women, doubtless frightened by that magic phrase, "the Indians!", would not easily consent to live so far from civilization where they are queens. The traders console themselves by marrying, in the style of the savages, very pretty half-breeds or native girls, who spend their lives trying to make them happy. These women are delighted to marry a white man, for, although traders live almost in the same way as the Indians, they always keep enough of the nature of the white man to show their wives more marks of affection than they would find among red husbands. The traders declare themselves happy, and for a man to speak thus requires three times more happiness than he can desire. They do not long for the cities and often remain for many years without returning to their families.

Two half-breeds continually went from the house to the store and back. The Mongrain brothers, the sons of a Canadian and an Osage beauty, are the interpreters of the Fur Company; both speak French and the Osage language with perfect fluency. The elder, Baptiste, is fifty years old. He is tall, and his face, quite sunburnt, is darker than that of the savages. His head is covered with a dirty black scarf tied on his forehead. His very black hair hangs on the side, and is tied at the back in a small

¹⁶ A great many relatives of Melicourt were concerned with the fur trade: his uncles, cousins, cousins-in-law, etc. The Chouteau, Cerré, Papin, Cabanné, Pratte, and other leading families in the fur trade were all allied. What one is concerned in this story is not now known.

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pigtail. Baptiste wears a filthy, colored shirt, *mitas*,¹⁷ deerskin moccasins, and a scarlet breechcloth,¹⁸ at the belt of which are tied his tobacco pouch, his pipe case, and scalping knife. Over all this he wears a blue blanket. Such is the physical appearance of the Chief of the Nion-Chou village.

His younger brother, Joseph Noël, is one of the village warriors, but is still too young to be admitted to the council with the right to speak. His brother, in order to keep a greater influence, keeps him away from the fire of the braves, in spite of the right to which his proven courage entitles him. Both brothers are chiefs of lodges¹⁹ and each one has two legitimate Indian wives.²⁰

Mr. Papin and the two half-breeds, free from business for the evening, sat with us in front of the door of the house where several Osage, smoking ponderously, had silently sat down on their heels. We talked for a long time and I learned then what follows.

Most red nations are known by the whites under conventional names, quite different from the ones they answer to. In

¹⁷ Leggins which reach the upper part of the thighs.—TIXIER. [Cf. Read, *Louisiana-French*, 97-98.]

¹⁸ *Braguet* is the original word, for which Tixier gives a note: "A piece of cloth passed between the thighs and fastened to the belt at both ends."

¹⁹ *Chefs de loge*. Thus are called the owners of a hut in which several families sometimes dwell.—TIXIER.

²⁰ The Noel Mongrain whom Pike and Wilkinson found so irritating married Pa-hu-shan, the daughter of the first White Hair (see n. 29, p. 128, *infra*). The membership of his family is uncertain. Joseph Mongrain and Pierre Melicourt Papin testified that about 1820 the following children of Noel and Pa-hu-shan were baptized in Saint Louis: Jean Baptiste, Noel, François, Joseph, Julie, Pelagie, Charles, Victoire, and Louis (but the *Baptismal Records of the Osage Nation*, from which these names are taken, states that the last three were from another mother). The Osage Treaty of June 2, 1825, (*Kappler, Indian Treaties*, II, 219) stated that Noel Mongrain was the son of Wa-taw-nagres, that he had ten children: Baptiste, Noel, Francis, Joseph, Mongrain, Louis, Victoria, Sophia, Julia, Juliet, and that he had four grandchildren: Charles, Francis, Louisson, and Wash. That treaty provided for each of these fifteen Mongrains a section of land "to commence on the Marais des Cygnes, where the western boundary line of the State of Missouri crosses it at the fork of Mine River, and to extend up Mine River, for quantity."

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their own language the Osage are named *Ouachachéhs*; the Delaware, *Lénapéhs*; the Comanche, *Patokas*; the Konsa, *Kansés*. The real names of the nations are religiously kept within themselves, and, if the whites change their names, they also give the civilized people names of their own composition.

The Osage, who were formerly considered among the most powerful nations, have lost much of their numerical importance; internal quarrels, wars, epidemics, and smallpox in particular, have decreased their number considerably. Today there are about three thousand Osage. They can raise about one thousand men to fight in a prairie war.²¹

For a long time, the Pawnee-Maha,²² separated from the Osage, have formed a completely independent nation. Their language, which was formerly the Osage tongue, is growing to be very different from it. A dreadful hatred forever divides these two nations which were one in older times. This hatred is so great that in the Osage language they use the same word to designate a Pawnee or any enemy, whatever the nation of the latter is; and it is the very name of the Pawnee which has this double meaning. The war has begun again between the two nations; a ceaseless and merciless conflict since a treason of the Pawnee, who, after burying the war hatchet, came under pretext of a friendly visit to the Osage and stole the warriors' horses.

Thwarted ambition, petty hatred, once separated the Konsa, or Kansa, from them, who still speak their mother tongue. A

²¹ For the Osage Indians, consult Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 156-59; Pike, *Expeditions*, (Couch, ed.), II, 525-32; Nuttall, *Journal*, 234-62; James, *Account of an Expedition . . . from the Notes of Major Long*, III, 265-82; Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 301-305; Catlin, *Letters*, II, 40-44; Foreman, *Indians and Pioneers*, *passim*; Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, *passim*; Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, *passim*; and other titles referred to in the following notes.

²² Tixier consistently refers to the "Pânie-Mohawks," but he must mean Pawnee-Mahas. James (*Account of an Expedition . . .*, II, 87) refers to the "Pawnee Mahas or Paynee Loups;" hardly any other traveler uses this term of Tixier's. Some account of them will be found in *Account of an Expedition*, II, 149 ff., and I, 243.

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bloody war followed this breaking off, but now the two nations are on good terms with each other.²³ Not very long ago a schism took place between the Osage and the band of Clermos, called Black Dog (Manka-Chonkêh), who carried away his huts on the Nion-Chou [Neosho] River a few miles above the Osage camp, and built there two villages known under the names of La Chenière and Grosse-Côte.²⁴

The Osage proper are divided into two main groups; the Great Osage (*Ouassa Tanga*) and the Little Osage (*Ouassa Chinka*). The head of the whole nation, the direct descendant of the White Hair,²⁵ the sovereign race, lives with the Great Osage,²⁶ and Big Chief commands the Little Osage, subordinate to the Great Osage.

The Great Osage live in four villages located a few miles away from one another; Nion-Chou, otherwise called Manrinhabotso ("The Village Which Scrapes the Sky") is the commercial capital of the Osage;²⁷ it is the residence of Mr. Papin, the

²³ The traders call them Kans.—TIXIER. [Cf. George P. Morehouse, "History of the Kansa or Kaw Indians," *Kansas Historical Collections*, X (1907-08), 327-68, and Hodge, *Handbook*, I, 653-56.]

²⁴ The schism occurred in 1802. In that year the exclusive trade with the Osage was taken away from the Chouteaus, who had enjoyed it for years, and given to Manuel Lisa, another fur trader of Saint Louis. Pierre Chouteau then induced a large body of the Osage to leave their villages on the river of their name and to settle on the Neosho, in the direction of the Arkansas, where he continued to have their trade. Many of the early travelers recount this, from Pike on. For Lisa, consult Walter B. Douglas, "Manuel Lisa," *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, III (1911), 233-68, 367-406. By Clermos, Tixier means Clermont; there were at least three chiefs of this name: father, son, and grandson. For Clermont, see note 29, *infra*. These two villages were considerably below the main group; generally called the Arkansas Osage, they were for many years under the chieftainship of the Clermonts. Black Dog was a lesser chief; for him see n. 5, p. 268, *infra*.

²⁵ See n. 29, p. 128, *infra*.

²⁶ Text reads: "Grands Os," which Tixier explained in a note: "Abbreviation for the word Osage used by the Creoles; it corresponds to the one generally used by the Indians, *ouassa* for *ouachachéh*."

²⁷ Cortambert, *Voyage aux pays des Osages*, 32, gave the name as Manrinhabatso and the significance as "that which touches the sky;" he did not use the name Nion-Chou. He placed the village on the right bank of the Niicho (Neosho). The name Nion-Chou is retained in our text as the name of this village.

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agent of the American Fur Company, and of the interpreters of the Government and of the Company. Nion-Chou's own Chief is Baptiste Mongrain, whom we know.

Naniompa ("The Village of the Pipe"), called thus because of a black stone good for making calumets which is found thereabouts, is composed of from forty to fifty huts.²⁸ Its Chief is Old White Hair,²⁹ the uncle of the present Head Chief.

²⁸ Available authorities differ widely on the placing of the Osage villages on the Neosho; one difficulty, of course, is that the Osage frequently shifted from one location to another a few miles distant. Douglas (James, *Three Years*, n. 16, 182) placed White Hair's village in 1822 in the northeast corner of Labette County and on the Neosho River. Foreman (*Indians and Pioneers*, 310) states that White Hair in 1822 removed from his old location on the Osage to a place near the site of the present town of Parsons, Kansas (in the north central part of Labette County), but this point is about ten miles west of the Neosho. Other writers have placed this principal village above the present town of Shaw in Neosho County (William Elsey Connelley, "Notes on the Early Indian Occupancy of the Great Plains," *Kansas Historical Collections*, XIV [1915-18], 486); six miles below the present city of St. Paul, that is, near the south line of Neosho County (Annie Heloise Abel, "Indian Reservations in Kansas," *Kansas Historical Collections* [1903-04], 77); near the present town of Osage Mission (St. Paul?), Neosho County (S. W. Brewster, "Reverend Father Paul M. Ponziglione," *Kansas Historical Collections*, IX [1905-06], 26); and about five miles south of the present town of Oswego, Labette County ("Explanation of Map," *Kansas Historical Collections*, IX [1905-06], 570). Almost all writers state specifically that the White Hair village was on the west or right bank of the Neosho.

The most reasonable location, however, seems to be that described in an editorial note to Miss Abel's article ("Indian Reservations in Kansas," 77, note). In 1865, in an endeavor to straighten out the question of boundary lines for the Osage and Cherokee reservations, the governor of Kansas (S. J. Crawford) ordered G. J. Endicott to re-survey the locations. "Starting at a point on the western boundary line of Missouri," Endicott reported, "136½ miles south from the Missouri river, and forty-one and a half miles north from the southwest corner of the state of Missouri, thence running on a due west line for twenty-seven miles to the original 'old White Hair village,' which is situated on the right or west bank of the Neosho River. From the 'old White Hair village,' to the thirty-seventh degree of north latitude (the southern line of the state of Kansas) is eleven and a half miles, but to the present survey of said line, only four and a half (that is, the survey of 1859)."

Such measurements place the village of White Hair at the site of the present town of Oswego, Labette County. From his text it is not clear whether Tixier would mean Naniompa (residence of the White Hairs) or the Maisons Cailles (residence of Majakita, chief of all the Osage and a White Hair on his mother's side) as the White Hair village. Later in his text (p. 140) he placed Naniompa across the prairie two miles away from Nion-Chou. Cortambert, however, placed Nion-Chou two leagues above White Hair's village, but does not state whether this is a direct line measurement or by way of the Neosho River (*Voyage*, 34); if a direct measurement, Nion-Chou would be located about midway between Hickory and Lightning Creeks. Cortambert located

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The Maisons Cailles³⁰ is the residence of Majakita (La Babine) the Great Chief of the nation.³¹ The village of the Quiet-Hearts³² under the command of Man-Chap-Ché-Mani (The-

two other villages, those of the Coeur Tranquille and the Little Osage, as *above* Nion-Chou, but did not specify distance.

²⁹ Much confusion exists as to the White Hair family. Hodge (*Handbook*, II, 944-45) apparently combines several persons of this name into one. Consultation of a variety of sources, however, permits the following summary of facts which appear to be certain. The first Chief to bear the name White Hair, according to Flint (*Recollections*, 155) took it to celebrate the snatching of a wig from the head of an American officer at the defeat of General St. Clair in 1790. Ten years later we find this same chief attending a conference at Saint Louis (Houck, *Spanish Regime*, II, 301 ff.). After the Louisiana Purchase, Pierre Chouteau took White Hair and other Chiefs to Washington to meet the President. In his journal for the last part of August and early September, 1806, Pike (at the Osage villages) referred several times to White Hair and his son, who was apparently a grown man. Houck states that this White Hair died in 1808 (*History of Missouri*, I, 193). Bradbury (*Travels*, 62) in 1811 "learned" at Fort Osage that a boy of six years of age, named Young White Hair, was Chief of the tribe, but is this consistent with the fact that in 1816 De Mun ("Journals," ed. Thomas Maitland Marshall, *Missouri Historical Society Collections*, V [Feb.-June, 1928], 316) at the village of the Great Osage met the Chief, Cheveux Blancs, who was apparently a grown man, and not a boy of eleven? At some time between this date and 1822 White Hair moved his village from the Little Osage River to the Neosho (Foreman, *Indians and Pioneers*, 310, sets 1822 as the year). From a letter that Foreman quotes (*Advancing the Frontier*, 122) there can be no doubt that a second White Hair, Chief of the Osage, died in 1832. Two years later Catlin met "the White Hair . . . another distinguished leader of the Osage . . . a very gallant and excellent man" (*Letters*, II, 42), and Foreman (*Indians and Pioneers*, facing page 20) reproduces a portrait by Catlin of "Pahuska or White Hair the younger," dated 1834. This must then be a third White Hair, a grandson of the first? It was probably this third White Hair to whom Cortambert referred as the Supreme Chief of all the villages on the Neosho (*Voyage*, 34). A Pahuska, or White Hair, signed every treaty between the United States and the Osage, from 1808 to 1839, and in most of them he was referred to as either Chief of the Great Osage or of all the Osage (Kappler, *Indian Treaties*, II; Peters, *Indian Treaties*).

What relation Tixier's Old White Hair is to these others is not quite certain, but the very use of the name indicates at least part of the confusion, for it is to be noted that Tixier's Old White Hair was a brother of the Head Chief (also named White Hair?). It must not be insisted upon, therefore, that the three White Hairs of the previous paragraphs were successive generations.

³⁰ *Caille* in the Creole language means spotted or piebald.—TIXIER. [Cortambert did not mention a village of this name.]

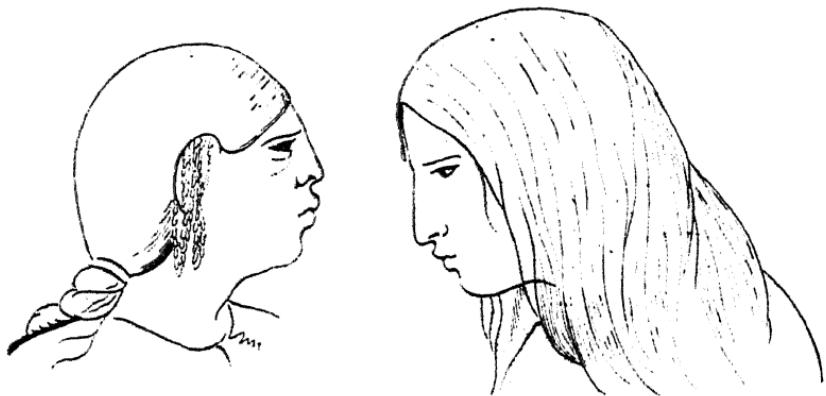
³¹ No other traveler or historian consulted mentions a chief of this name, nor does any name in the list of signers to the treaty of 1839 approximate this (see n. 39, p. 130, *infra*). Later in this chapter Tixier declares that Majakita was the son of a sister of the previous Head Chief, White Hair.

³² This is one of the villages that Cortambert placed above Nion-Chou (*Voyage*, 34). Tixier used the same designation: *Cœurs-Tranquilles*, but in the plural form.



Ouichinghêh

Pleureuse



Young Girl

Wife of the Head Chief of the Kansa

DRAWN FROM LIFE BY VICTOR TIXIER

Four Indian Women

NION-CHOU

One-Who-Crawls-on-the-Ground)³³ is inhabited by young warriors who have taken the name of Band-of-Dogs.³⁴

A fifth village, whose Chief is named Ouachinka-Lâgri (Handsome Bird), forms a small independent republic. This politic Chief, clever and enterprising, never mingles with the rest of the nation; he enjoys great authority over the tribe. The name Handsome Bird is poorly chosen, for besides being very ugly, this Chief is lame.³⁵ In regard to this last feature, Mr. Papin warned us not to watch the savages afflicted with any deformity of the body. The greatest insult which can be done to them is to remind them of their infirmities. Indiscreet looks seem to them indirect reproach.

The Osage formerly lived on the banks of the Missouri and the Mississippi on a stretch a hundred leagues long. After the French established themselves in Saint Louis, they were gradually driven as far as the Osage River, on the banks of which they still lived twenty-five years ago. These dangerous Osage withdrew step by step, and disputed long the grounds they finally had to give up to superior forces. They exercised cruel reprisals against the inhabitants of Saint Louis, and many a French scalp has dried in front of the Osage wigwams. When the Americans took possession of the country, they followed another system; they no longer use weapons; the mercantile spirit is now predominant. Trade agreements³⁶ concluded since the

³³ Among the signers to the treaty of June 2, 1825 (Peters, *Indian Treaties*, 244) I find a Manchehamani who was probably Tixier's friend.

³⁴ *Bande-des-Chiens*.

³⁵ *Bel-Oiseau* (as he was called by many travelers). There is hardly more certainty about the identity of this person than about White Hair. A Chief of this name figures in Pike (Coues, ed., II, 384, 398). Among the signers to the treaty of June 2, 1825, is "Chingawassa or Handsome Bird" (Peters, *Indian Treaties*, 243); to that of August 10, 1825, "Shin-ga-wassa, (Handsome Bird) Chief of the Great Osages" (*Ibid.*, 270). It is probably our man whom Catlin met in 1834 (*Letters*, II, 43).

³⁶ Not trade agreements in the ordinary commercial sense as between private persons, but "diplomatic" ones between the United States Government and the Indian nations.

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sale of Louisiana have driven the Osage as far as Nion-Chou.³⁷ But the banks of this river are fertile; the axes of the Americans will cut down the beautiful trees of the point, and a new treaty will bring the nation nearer the Arkansas River.

Today the Osage lands are at least a hundred miles wide along the Missouri frontier and three hundred and fifty miles deep.³⁸ They border on the north the lands of the Peoria, Ottawa, and Kansa; on the south, those of the Seneca and Cherokee.

The American Government buys the lands of the Indians for a very low price by means of annuities. According to a treaty concluded in 1838, the United States must pay the Osage for twenty years a sum of \$18,000. Every individual in the nation receives a share of this money, more or less substantial, according to his or her rank, age, and sex. The half-breeds and the whites adopted by the tribe receive their share also.³⁹

This annuity comes back to the Fur Company almost in its entirety; in 1840, \$16,000 went into Mr. Papin's coffers.

Such deals make the redskins well off and favor their in-born laziness. As soon as the annuities are paid in full, being no longer able to satisfy the new needs which they have ac-

³⁷ Previous to their location on the Neosho, the Osage villages had been on the Osage, the Little Osage, and the Marmaton, near the junction of these rivers. For the history of the tribe between 1770 and 1810 see Foreman, *Indians and Pioneers*, 11-28.

³⁸ By the treaty of June 2, 1825, the Osage ceded all of their lands in the State of Missouri and the Territory of Arkansas. They were to retain a tract "beginning at a point due East of White Hair's Village, and twenty-five miles West of the Western boundary of the State of Missouri, fronting on a North and South line, so as to leave ten miles North, and forty miles South, of the point of said beginning, and extending West, with the width of fifty miles, to the Western boundary of the lands hereby ceded (that is, to a line from the head sources of the Kansas River south through the Rock Saline)." Kappler, *Indian Treaties*, II, 217.

³⁹ Tixier must mean the treaty signed January 11, 1839; the annuity was there fixed at \$20,000. The reservations set apart for various individuals of the tribe in 1825 were by this treaty to be purchased for not more than two dollars per acre. A number of Chiefs were to be furnished by the government each with a house worth \$200, others were to get homes worth \$100. For their names see Peters, *Indian Treaties*, 577-78.

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quired, the Osage will accept new propositions and will go deeper into the hinterland.

It is not a natural feature of the redskins to figure out money matters and to economize. The savages have no idea of the relative value of money; in a deal they will ask an enormous sum for the thing one wants to buy from them, and then will let it go for a piece of scarlet material or a necklace worth a hundred times less. If they happen to have money, they cannot keep it; they spend it like children. They never think of the next day. When an Osage has a full stomach, tobacco, and auspicious dreams, he goes to sleep without any worry or any thought of any kind.

In spite of their natural carelessness and the advantages provided them by the cash annuities they receive, the Osage are aware that they are cheated on the value of their lands, and, therefore, have conceived a great hatred for the Americans, whom they call *Manhēh-Tangas* (Long Knives), a nickname which they owe to the swords of the border dragoons.⁴⁰ They are very fond of the *Ishta-jēh*⁴¹ (the French and the Creoles) with whom they are on good terms. They know very well how to distinguish the French from the Americans, and the Creoles from the French from France or the other side of the Big Water.

The day following our arrival Joe, the Mexican, left with three horses to fetch our companions, who arrived in the evening. The preceding day they had lived on four *papabottes* killed after we had left, but not being able to satisfy a ravenous hunger with these birds, which are very skinny in the egg-laying season, they had tried to fish. A needle bent after being

⁴⁰ The Indians used the term Long Knives for Americans long before the border dragoons came into existence. For the dragoons in the west see Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley, 1833-1850*.

⁴¹ Literally, Poil-aux-yeux.—TIXIER. [Cortambert (*Voyage*, 36) said that the Osage used this designation “parce que nous laissons croître nos sourcils.”]

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heated in the fire was used for a hook, but a large carp took away their fishing-line as well as their hopes for a dinner. Their appetites were beginning to torment them when provisions we had sent by the scout arrived. They had not been able to find the lost horses. The night was sad, and in the morning they were awakened by a bullet whizzing by their ears. It was an Indian who, according to prairie custom, had discharged his gun upon awakening. This man came to sit by their fire; they shared with him what was left of the provisions; at last, when they were beginning to think they had been forgotten, Joe arrived with the horses.

The news of our arrival had spread around the village, and soon several chiefs and the most important warriors came to visit us; they came with a serious expression and held out their hands greeting us with "*Oēh.*" We answered, "*Oēh.*" We sat around with the braves, smoking the pipe of friendship. We were served a dish of *sagamité* and we ate in turn with the same *mikouën*.

These Osage gentlemen said a great many things to us, undoubtedly very kind, but which we did not understand. They seemed very pleased with us and smoked our tobacco with more pleasure than their own, repeating "*Nanihûh dita tanhêh, vita pichêh.*" I learned later that it meant: "your tobacco is good, mine is bad." They took our pipes from our mouths without ceremony as soon as they were lighted, and gave them back to us when they had finished smoking them. I thought I had found the way of bringing this friendly robbery to an end by offering cigarettes to my red friends, hoping that they would not know how to smoke them. As a matter of fact they did not know how to use them, but the savages are clever people; they unrolled the cigarettes, took the tobacco, filled their pipes, and lighted them with the paper.

Our savages would not have lighted their pipes from anoth-

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er pipe or a cigar; they claim that such procedure brings bad luck. They want a flame or live coal which has not been already used. I saw them muttering a few words when they brought a light to their tobacco; it was the "prayer of the pipe" which they address to *Oua-Kondah* exclusively in such circumstances. As an Osage brings a light to his pipe, he asks a favor of the Great Spirit. It may be for a house, a scalp, or a mistress. He begins to smoke only when he has finished his prayer.⁴²

The Osage formerly smoked the *papouah*, the second bark of a species of sumac tree very common on the prairie. The smoke of the *papouah* is quite pleasant. The Osage do not chew tobacco.

Our new friends left us at nightfall to return to their villages. Before mounting their horses they shook hands with us again and told us goodbye with these words: "*Oêh, ouichinga* (good evening, friend)." These friendly words promised implicitly that nothing would be stolen from us. The friends of a redskin are the only people protected from him. On the prairie robbery is honorable. As formerly in Sparta, a clever thief is entitled to respect; clumsiness alone can make theft a crime.

Mr. Papin gave the inhabitants of Nion-Chou a cow, which was shot down immediately. It was cut to pieces at once and taken to the village. One of the most famous warriors came to invite us to a great feast, which he gave in his hut. This savage was Striker-of-Chiefs.⁴³ He gained this glorious epithet on the battlefield by striking with his tomahawk an enemy chief surrounded by his warriors. We went to his house.

⁴² Cf. Nuttall, *Journal*, 134, concerning the Quapaw: "I took an opportunity to inquire of him, whether the Quapaws considered smoking as in any way connected with their religion, to which he answered, that they merely regarded it as a private gratification or luxury; but that the Osages smoked to God, or to the sun, and accompanied it by a short apostrophe: as 'Great Spirit, deign to smoke with me, as a friend! fire and earth, smoke with me, and assist me to destroy mine enemies, the Caddoes, Pawnees, Mahas, &c.! my dogs and horses, smoke also with me!'"

⁴³ *Frappeur-de-chefs* in the original. For further comment on the significance of this action see n. 2, p. 211, *infra*.

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The hut was filled with warriors; some were sitting on mats, wrapped up to their armpits with blankets; others were watching the cooking. The women remained sitting on their heels at the other end of the hut. That was an interesting night, all these men together, their picturesque clothes, their painted faces, some motionless and serious, others active and animated, in the half-light of the hut, with the reflections and shadows produced by the flames of two fires burning in holes dug into the ground.

The walls are covered inside with reed mats and are hung here and there with arms and implements of husbandry. Both ends are piled up with luggage and harness; there they keep bundles containing provisions of dried meat and those precious caskets of hardened bison-skin in which they keep with equal care, but separately, the ornaments of the warriors and the garments worn by the Osage beauties, with the cakes⁴⁴ of red and verdigris so necessary for the adornment of the savages. Also at the end of the hut are hung the shield,⁴⁵ the quiver and the favorite bow, the famous war mat of the brave, the trophy which contains his titles to glory.⁴⁶

In front of the luggage, bison-skins still covered with hair are laid out on the ground. The women sit there during the day when their work does not keep them standing. Two holes for fires are dug out in the ground in places which correspond to the holes in the roof, and strong pegs support a pot where meat and corn are continually cooking. Finally, in the space between the two fires, mats rolled during the day are laid out for the night and when the warriors eat their meals.

Sitting on a mat, we were served with a wooden bowl filled

⁴⁴ *Palettes*. Packages of powdered colors which the Indians put on their faces after mixing them with grease.—TIXIER.

⁴⁵ *Pare-fleches*. Shields, Creole expression.—TIXIER.

⁴⁶ Cf. Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe* (Twenty-seventh Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology), 411 ff.

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with half-cooked meat and the water in which it had boiled. There were four of us around a huge piece of beef, and since there was no trace of a fork, we boldly started with the meat, helping ourselves with our fingers and knives. A horn spoon was used by all of us in turn to drink the bouillon. A roast of huge size followed this first course, then an extremely long sausage, and the meal ended with a cup of coffee rightly named *manka-sabéh* or black medicine; it was accompanied with corn-meal dough fried in fat, a favorite delicacy which the traders call *beigne*.⁴⁷ Of course, napkins and bread were out of the question.

They left in front of us the dishes that we had not finished. The food which an Osage places in front of his guest belongs to him, and he can, as he desires, eat it or take it away. To be polite, we sent the surplus of our meal to the women in the hut, who were looking at it with great covetousness.

The right to take away food offered by the host leads me to speak of the hospitality of the Osage. In this nation there are poor people; and those who are poor have no horses, no means of hunting the bison in order to secure meat. They own neither huts nor blankets; they live, so to speak, at the expense of the community. If one of these unfortunates comes to the hut of a warrior and says: "I am coming to your lodge;" the brave replies: "This is good!" The poor man becomes his guest; he eats, smokes, and warms himself at the fire of the warrior; he does as he likes without ever being asked to account for his actions; he will never be compelled to do any work and will be waited on. If he grows bored in this hut, he leaves without saying good-bye or thank you; he goes without any formality to sit by another fire; if he has no blanket, he can go to a rich man in all confidence and say, "Here is the snow season coming and I

⁴⁷ Cf. Clapin, *Dictionnaire Canadien-français*, 41.

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have no blanket; yours is old, give me your blanket," and the rich man will give it to him.

Suppose a stranger comes and lives for a year in a lodge. The head of the lodge will give him the best cuts of venison, and let him sleep on his best buffalo-skin; when the stranger leaves, the savage will refuse presents and thanks and will thank the traveler for choosing to live under his roof instead of another's. These customs may encourage the laziness of some, but their origin is so respectable and so innocent that this genuinely noble way of showing hospitality would make one forgive these so-called barbarians many a fault.

Coming back to Mr. Papin's house, I admired the fine figures and handsome bearing of the Osage who were walking in the village, the unconcerned, graceful attitudes of those who played on the ground, pushing along certain lines pebbles of various colors.

The men are tall and perfectly proportioned. They have at the same time all the physical qualities which denote skill and strength combined with graceful movements. Their limbs are slender, lean, and wiry, without much display of muscles; their chests are expansive, their waists narrow, their necks short, their shoulders high and broad, their arms rather long, their legs lean and slender, their knees, hands, and feet small.

Their heads are small, the occiputs are flat. Such is the kind of beauty they are anxious to show, and, in order to obtain it, they press the heads of newly-born children against the boards which serve them as cradles; they think the heads of the French are too long and quite ugly. The foreheads of the Osage are high and narrow, their temples wide, their eyes small, black, and deeply set but quite bright, their cheek bones prominent. Their noses are aquiline with a slight curve, and with wide, open nostrils. Their upper lips are flat, the lower large and protruding; their mouths are wide, their teeth small, closely set but

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worn down early in their lives from chewing dried meat; they have cleft chins. Their ears, slit by knives, grow to be enormous, and they hang low under the weight of the ornaments with which they are laden. There is a complete lack of beard and eyebrows on their faces, for they carefully pull out the little hair which happens to grow there.

Their calm, dignified faces show great shrewdness; there is something soldierly and serious about the expression. Their hair is black and thick. The Osage shave their heads, except for the top, from which two strands of hair branch off and grow straight back to the occiput, where they form a tuft which falls to the lower part of the neck; between these strands grow two braids, the beauty of which consists in their length. Such is the war hairdress. In mourning, the Osage let their hair grow.

The redskins seldom go out without painting themselves; the colors they use are, first, vermillion, then verdigris, and then yellow, which they buy from the trader; lacking these, they use ochre, chalk, or even mud. When their faces are covered with mud, it is a sign they are fasting or in mourning. The Osage always paint red that part of their head around their hair, the eye-sockets, and their ears; these are the national colors, the war-time paint. The other colors, indifferently put on the other parts of their bodies, depend upon their individual fancy.

They wear a loin cloth of scarlet or blue, held by a woolen belt adorned with beads, where they keep their knives in sheathes of painted skin, their pipe holders, tobacco pouches, bags for red paint, mirrors, and the steel springs which they use to pluck the little beard and eyebrows with which Nature adorned them. Leggings and moccasins made of deerskin cover their legs and feet. The Osage never tie the strings of their moccasins around their feet; this detail enables them to recognize the tracks of the Pawnee, who pass this string under their feet. Their garters, as well as their belts, are decorated with *rassades*,

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which are big white or blue beads. For cloaks they use wool blankets of white, blue, or green colors, although the red ones are preferred. The traders order them from France. Some, which are more highly rated, are brought from England; they are known under the name of Mackinaws. The Osage nowadays seldom wear a buffalo-robe; it is more convenient and less tiring to pay for a blanket than to prepare, paint, and embroider a bison-skin.

The ornaments for their attire are composed of earrings, necklaces of porcelain, and bracelets of various shapes made of brass, iron, and even silver. Beads, backbones, snake-skins, stuffed birds, and feathers are also used as finery. The use of eagle feathers is limited to those who have stolen at least a horse from the enemy. Those warriors who have killed a man are the only ones entitled to wear little bells and the war hatchet. On the prairies we shall see more ways of dressing.

The women are not as well favored by nature as the men. The ugliness of the female Osage is proverbial. They are short but stout and well built. They wear their hair long and flowing. The young girls and the half-breeds braid it and tie it at the back of their heads, or tie it in two curls in front of their ears with a red ribbon adorned with silver rings.

The old women wear some sort of tunic which is passed under one shoulder and is attached on the other. The young ones are clad with a sort of man's shirt made of bright-colored material. All of them, whether young or old, wear skirts of blue or scarlet cloth; the *mitas* are red when the skirt is blue and vice versa. They also wear skin moccasins. Nearly all the female Osage have their bodies tattooed with blue lines which intersect and form irregular designs. It is generally during puberty that the young girls are tattooed. Their necks, chests, backs, arms, the backs of their hands, their stomachs down to the hips, the lower part of their thighs, and their legs are marked with in-

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delible blue lines, which are drawn with a red-hot iron and charcoal. One often sees near the figures they describe white scars caused by serious burns.

The children are remarkable for their prominent abdomens; they are almost naked until they are ten years old; at this age they begin wearing a blanket; some of them are clad with a sort of scarlet-colored coat which hides nothing but their backs.

Tired of eating salt pork and dried beef constantly, I suggested to M. Guérin that we should go and hunt turkeys in the woods which border the Nion-Chou.⁴⁸ We left early; in spite of our getting up so early, the mosquitoes had awakened earlier than we, and hardly had we arrived in the woods before swarms of these awful insects began to wage war on us. I wrapped my head in a muffler. I hoped that by walking without even stopping I would be spared their bites, but all my motions and my defensive armor did not prevent me from being horribly tormented by these wretches. A turkey flew away near me; I shot in its direction at random, for I could not aim, since hardly had my hands ceased protecting my face before a cloud of mosquitoes pounced upon it. I soon gave up the game and ran directly to the house, where I dipped my head and hands into cold water. My poor companion arrived shortly after. He looked as if he had St. Anthony's fire, his face was so swollen. We burst out laughing, looking at each other.

In our room five half-breeds had been billeted with us. They had arrived in Nion-Chou the preceding day in view of the approaching hunt. It was extremely hot; we had been forced to keep doors and windows closed to protect ourselves against the mosquitoes, but these wretched insects had already taken possession of the dormitory. We had to endure an insufferable heat under our blankets to keep ourselves out of reach of

⁴⁸ The accepted name of this river is not *Nion-Chou* but *Neosho*. Tixier consistently uses the one form throughout. Cortambert wrote it *Niocho*.

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our winged enemies. We had the idea of fumigating the room methodically before going to bed; this means failed us. The cruel bites of the voracious mosquitoes obliged us to give up, and we went out to sleep under the stars. What a change from the mosquito nets of Louisiana to such primitive beds as these! I understood then one of the good reasons which prompt the savages to go away from their huts during the season of the mosquitoes.

One of our years corresponds to two years of the Osage calendar, autumn-year, and summer-year. Each one has its hunting. The autumn-year begins in October and ends in March; it is at that time that pelts of all kinds are gathered and prepared—bison, deer, wolf, etc. The summer hunting begins during the early part of June and ends toward the middle of August. People leave their villages to avoid the mosquitoes, which torment men, and the buffalo flies, which not only persecute but sometimes kill horses. During the summer-year intermittent fevers and other epidemics often kill many warriors. The stocks of dried meat stored up during the winter hunts are exhausted; corn sown and weeded does not need any more care; the Osage get ready to leave the huts, where only old people remain, too weak to stand the hardships of hunting, and the poor who have neither huts nor horses; the women start to wail every morning to ask *Oua-Kondah* for a good hunt, and, following their lead, the council of the warriors assembles and deliberates on the necessity of leaving and on the route which the various villages ought to follow.

The women wailed for a few days and the warriors were called together to sit around the council fire. We were invited to go with Mr. Papin and join the assembly which was to meet at the village of Naniompa, separated from Nion-Chou by a two-mile stretch of prairie. We left with Baptiste, who was talking with the trader in French and showed a violent hatred

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against the Head Chief and above all against the Woman-Chief, of whom he spoke in terms more than improper, even for a savage. This hatred had originated in his extreme ambition. Baptiste wished he might exert more influence than his rival, and, in spite of his cleverness and his policy, he had only been able to obtain the same amount of consideration. He was not yet satisfied; the head of a village and of a certain faction, he wanted even more. Baptiste was a surly egotist; what is said of mulattoes may well be applied to the half-breeds; they have all the vices of the two races they come from.⁴⁹

While we went through the prairie, I was surprised to see no face scarred by smallpox among the savages who surrounded us. Our Osage have all been vaccinated for a long time. It has been easy to demonstrate the lasting effects of vaccination, and they surrendered to evidence. No one was found among them to preach a second vaccination, and fortunately!—for among the Osage, as in France, the effects of such doctrine would have been to decrease the people's confidence, and the common sense of these primitive people would have made them refuse any kind of vaccination. Their neighbors and perennial enemies, the Pawnee-Maha, who have never accepted vaccination, have undergone tremendous casualties; in the savage way of living, everything concurs to favor the development of smallpox.

The warriors who were going to the council were circling around us on frisky horses adorned with plumes. At times they raced at a gallop, two abreast, exciting their horses with their voices and their whips; at times, resuming a serious demeanor, they ambled gravely. Nothing could equal the skill and gracefulness of these warriors and of the folds of the blankets with

⁴⁹ Tixier here repeated unsound commonplaces. For interesting brief discussions see Hodge, *Handbook*, "Mixed Bloods," I, 913-14, and "Popular Fallacies," II, 285. Obviously the qualities of the half-breed are going to depend upon the stock from which he is bred.

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which they draped themselves with innate elegance, and which streamed behind them like the veils of an ancient statue.

We arrived at Naniompa and dismounted in front of the council lodge. The fire was burning in the middle of the room; the warriors sat smoking in silence. In order to awaken their minds, the chiefs began to fill their stomachs, and boiled dried meat was placed in front of us. The Osage whom we did not yet know came and shook hands with us, and the warriors grouped themselves five around each plate of meat. Those who were served last showed neither impatience nor displeasure. After the meal they smoked silently; the time for deliberation had come, and the Head Chief did not arrive. Some messages were given. A man from the Little Osage announced that his people would not be able to leave for two nights and begged the rest of the nation to wait during this length of time, which was granted after some discussion. One question seemed hard to solve and they sent for old White Hair, the Nestor of the Osage. This old man, still standing straight, although eighty Gregorian years old, came walking with the help of a carved stick. His words were listened to with respect, and whenever he interrupted his speech the Indians answered "*ouéh*" (yes), or else "*tanhéh*" (that is right).

There are in the brilliant society of the most civilized cities in Europe, in the most learned societies, in the most eminent diplomatic bodies, many men who, like me, might be given a lesson at this Osage Council on how to discuss matters. The chiefs spoke in turn after taking their time for reflection; they paused as often and as long as they wished, sure that no voice would be raised before they had concluded their speech with "I have spoken" or its equivalent. They knew how to listen without showing impatience at the objections presented to them; later I realized that they took the trouble of pondering over them before answering them or presenting any themselves. I

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have never heard two speakers at the same time around the warriors' fire. A discussion between two men was never interrupted under any pretext by a third before he had been invited to speak. The half-breeds, whose manners are partly those of the savages, do not know how to listen and discuss as they do; their white blood is speaking.

However, the meeting was suspended while waiting for the Head Chief, whom they had sent for. In the meantime, I went to sit with James at the fire of the old White Hair. He received us cordially, offered us pounded dried meat, and, according to the usage of the heads of lodges who want to honor their guests, he ate only after we had passed the plate to him. He told my companion how he had known his grandfather, the Governor of Saint Louis, and told him how glad he was to see the grandson of his old friend.⁵⁰

The young White Hair asked us into his hut. A cousin of the present Head Chief, he had legitimate rights to the title of head of the nation, being the son of the former Chief's brother, while Majakita was the son of the Chief's sister. However, as the last Head Chief had died without leaving children, it was permissible to hesitate before making a choice between the two cousins. The Osage have no lawyers to defend people's rights, and, helped by the intrigues of the Fur Company, Majakita was elected by the warriors' council during the absence of the young White Hair who, married to a girl of the Little Osage tribe, could not be there to establish his rights. He showed us docu-

⁵⁰ It is here that the first real clue to the identity of "James" is given. The Governor referred to was Zenon Trudeau who served there from 1792 to 1799. His eldest son, René, was the father of James de Berty Trudeau. There is a story in the Trudeau family that Zenon befriended a wounded Osage Chief and helped him back to his village and that the Osage in long-remembered gratitude received James with pleasure and made him the suit in which the portrait was painted. That incident, which may well be true, does not necessarily suggest an identity between the wounded Chief and White Hair. For Old White Hair and the succession of the chieftainship, see n. 29, p. 128, *supra*.

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ments in English, French, and Spanish which seemed to confirm his claims.⁵¹

This White Hair remained a mere chief as before and did not try to secure the rank which ought to have been his. He did not raise a party of opposition and did not disturb the peace of a nation through the politics of personal ambition. One seldom sees such examples of wisdom among white rulers.

As we left this hut, Majakita arrived in a costume which did not show any difference between him and the other warriors. The Head Chief was one of the ugliest men in the nation; he looked shrewd and pitiless; his big lips were the cause for the name Majakita (The Lips).⁵² He entered the council, shook hands with us, and the calumets were filled again. The Head Chief talked for a long time to Baptiste with some visible bitterness and in spite of that impassibility which the savages are so proud of, he allowed his hatred to show in his excited gestures and the expression of his eyes, which he vainly tried to make calm.

When he paused, the warriors did not answer "*ouéh*" any more but "*han-häi*." These two expressions have the same meaning; however "*han-häi*" is a more familiar expression. The Head Chief is the father of the nation.

It was resolved to wait for the Little Osage two nights longer; the route to be followed was decided upon and the meeting was adjourned.

As I left the council fire, I saw an Indian passing whose hair was long and unkempt and whose face was smeared with mud; he sang in a lugubrious despairing tone a monotonous song which he accompanied with tears. This man had been nick-

⁵¹ See n. 29, p. 128, *supra*. Is this Young White Hair possibly the George White Hair prominent among the Osage in the 1850's?

⁵² The French form of the name was *La Babine*. Dorrance points out that in America it is used only of human beings.

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named Pichêh (The Mean One) because on one day of battle he had struck seven enemies and scalped two.

At this time Pichêh was raising a war party, and he cried at the doors of the huts to enlist warriors who were to help him under his command to fulfill a vow to slay some Pawnee, in honor of his wife, who had died a year ago. He promised a great victory and many scalps to the warriors and swore to have himself killed if only one of his brave followers happened to be killed.

The chiefs or the mere warriors who raise parties bear the name of *partisans*; they have to observe certain rituals faithfully and fast every day until sunset. Early in the morning, they dress themselves *en terre*,⁵³ that is to say they cover their faces with mud. They begin then to cry and sing to excite pity among the braves and in their song they state the motives which have made them undertake a war. Most of the time it is some religious objective or at least they cover their ambition or their thirst for military glory under a religious purpose. Sometimes they want to sacrifice Pawnee to honor some dead relative; sometimes the Master of Life has given them during a dream the order to offer him a few scalps. Another time, *Oua-Kondah* has warned them in the same way that an expedition was being prepared against the Osage, that the Pawnee have taken salt from the nation's salt mines, or that the Great Spirit should like to see the Osage warriors burn a Maha village. The partisan always finds the ears of the braves open to his speeches; he excites them by reminding them of the glory of their fathers; he promises horses and scalps to the young men, and the warriors promise to follow him.

In the evening the partisan washes off the mud and eats

⁵³ For this and other customs among the Osage, the reader will wish to consult a number of very interesting monographs by Francis La Flesche in the reports of the Bureau of American Ethnology: *The Rite of Vigil*, *Rite of the Wa-xo'-be*, and *Rite of the Chiefs*. Also Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*.

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some food. To eat with his face daubed with clay is an awful sacrilege. One may break his fast; but one cannot eat as long as his face is covered with mud. The women who fast also smear themselves with clay; they only keep a badge of mud on their heads.

Some partisans were lamenting also while going through other villages. In spite of the division of the nation in villages recognizing particular chiefs, the partisans have a right to go to anyone to enroll braves who may give up their natural chiefs and adopt new ones for the duration of the expedition.⁵⁴

Called near some patients, we found the *Ouakantakus*, the sorcerers or doctors (the two words are synonyms) quite surprised not to see us make the same evocations and witchcrafts they do, for this is all they know. Our poor colleagues are not very well informed; most of the time they let nature take its course.⁵⁵ They do not even treat broken bones. Besides I discovered through experience that it is perfectly useless to try to induce an Osage to keep any surgical apparatus on.

The illnesses I have observed the most frequently among the redskins are, in the first place, affections of the eyes; films on the cornea and blindness are very common. Endless intermittent fevers and rheumatism come next. Then inflammations of the various respiratory organs. I saw a few afflicted with typhoid fever and two or three scrofulous patients. Syphilis is a common disease and can be cured easily with sudorifics. I have never seen any of the consecutive symptoms. It is said they are never seen among the savages. None of the diseases which strike

⁵⁴ Cf. E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 79-80; Cortambert, *Voyage aux pays des Osages*, 34-35.

⁵⁵ "The wife of N(oel) was very ill; several doctors came to treat her. I do not know how the poor unfortunate could endure the noise which these charlatans made about her. . . . The doctors came as they did yesterday to make a thousand contortions about the invalid."—De Mun, "Journals," 316-17. Cf. also E. James, *Long's Expedition*, III, 52-56.

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the civilized man spares the redskins. The illnesses of the Osage are simple, like their way of living, but often serious.

We had been ready to leave for a very long time and we took advantage of the time we had left before our departure to study the Osage language. Mr. Papin and the half-breeds were very busy with their preparations; we only asked them for the indispensable words we needed to ask questions from the many savages who came to see us every day. I wrote all the words the translation of which I wanted to know. I went toward a young warrior and pointing to his knife said, pronouncing as well as I could, "*Tata nihr?*" (What name?) He answered: "*Manhēh.*" I wished to know the name of my kind instructor and according to my instructions I asked him: "*Tata cha cha nihr?*" (What is your name?) He seemed satisfied with my question. "*Man-chap-ché-mani,*" he said; in French, *Celui qui rampe à terre* (The-One-Who-Crawls-on-the-Ground). I had him repeat this endless name more than ten times before I was able to write it down. I learnt from my friend a great many words of frequent use; but when the stars were in question I had much trouble to have him understand me. The sun was hidden by clouds, and not being able to point to it I imagined describing with my hand the course of this star, but not having started my gesture precisely from the east, he did not understand. When I had ascertained my position better, he pointed to the sun, which appeared from the clouds, and said: "*Déh mēhēh*" (There is the sun). The Osage verbs have always caused me to despair: it was difficult to ask them from my kind savage; however, by imitating the action they stand for, I succeeded in obtaining the Osage words corresponding to some of them, such as *to eat*, *to drink*, *to sleep*, etc. I had thus a good number of substantives, and a few adjectives, but few verbs. This small dictionary has been very useful to me; I often had to consult it. I lost it with

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much regret during a serious illness I had on my return to Saint Louis.

The Osage language is poor in nouns but rich in endings which modify or change their meanings. Therefore, according to what the traders say, it is very difficult to speak it well. One of the interpreters has assured me that Mr. Ed. Chouteau was the only white man who spoke it like an Osage. It is a soft harmonious language, which has not, as it is commonly said of uncivilized languages, a great many guttural sounds; it is sung, so to speak, and the slow delivery of each syllable will give the word a great force of expression. An adjective is put to the superlative by lengthening its last syllable. However, superlative forms exist and some are quite different from the positive form: *tanhēh* means "good;" *lāgheni*, "very good." This superlative assumes a greater force when another one is adjoined to it; one says *ouagheni lāgheni*, "extremely good," and literally these two words mean "very great, very good." This language seemed to me more harmonious when used by men than when women spoke it, for the latter's voices are rather shrill.

The pronunciation is soft, and guttural sounds are made almost harmonious. There is, however, a very harsh expression which the Osage Indians frequently use; it must be the one Cooper transcribed *ugh*:⁵⁶ for it is used under the same circumstances. It is pronounced in such a queer way that I give up writing it. One finds in the Osage language, the Spanish *jota* and the German *ch*, in *Ishta-jéh*, for instance; but as the Osage have also the French pronunciation of *ch*, I thought I should indicate the former by the letters *sh* and that of the *jota* by *j*.

⁵⁶ Though it has become almost traditional in certain kinds of literature to spell this exclamation *ugh*, Cooper did spell it *ugh* (for instance, in *The Last of the Mohicans*). For the interest Cooper aroused in France, consult G. B. Bosset, *Fenimore Cooper et le roman en France vers 1830* (Paris, Vrin, n.d.), and Margaret Murray Gibb, *Le Roman de Bas-de-Cuir. Etude sur Fenimore Cooper et son influence en France* (Paris, Champion, 1927).

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The open *é* is pronounced very long and might well be expressed by the Greek *eta*. I have never seen any sign of writing in the prairie country.

Arithmetic is very primitive. What the Osage know can be compared with the decimal system. They count *viéh* (one); *nompa* (two); *låbeni* (three); to *grêhbenan* (ten); then *grêhbenan-viéh* (ten-one) to *nompa-grêhbenan* (two-ten or twenty); then *nompa-grêhbenan-viéh* (two-ten-one, or twenty-one); *nompa-grêhbenan-nompa* (two ten two, twenty-two), to thirteen or *låbeni-grêhbenan* etc. to ten-ten, the uppermost of their high arithmetic units. One must be rather familiar with the language not to say, for instance, *grêhbenan-taupa* (fourteen) for *taupa grêhbenan* (forty) or vice versa.⁵⁷

Two years in the Osage system do not quite correspond to one of ours, for each one of theirs is strictly composed of six moons; we calculate time in days, they count it in nights. Hours are indicated by the height of the sun. They know a few stars —Venus, the Greater Bear, the Polar Star.⁵⁸

The day following the council, Big Chief of the Little Osage came to tell Mr. Papin that the warriors happened to be ready to leave before the appointed time, that they did not wish to take the same route as ours to go to the Arkansas, and therefore would leave the next day and would wait for us to cross the *Nhi-Sudgêh*.⁵⁹ It was obvious that the reason for this Chief's request at the council was a desire to get a head start. We would probably not see him during the whole hunting expedition,

⁵⁷ For the Osage language consult La Flesche, *Dictionary*. Cf. the vocabularies in the appendix to the present volume and those of Bradbury, *Travels*, 215-21, and of Say in E. James, *Long's Expedition*, IV, 289-308.

⁵⁸ Nuttall allows the Osage about the same knowledge of the stars; he does not, however, speak of their year being one of six months. (*Journal*, 238-39.)

⁵⁹ The Arkansas River, or River of the Bows [rivière des arcs].—TIXIER. [These forms Tixier used interchangeably throughout his book. He confuses, of course, the word for bows with the abbreviation for Arkansas: the common heading on a letter, for instance, among the Creoles, was *Aux Arcs.*, instead of *Aux Arkansas.*]

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which was exactly what happened. Big Chief deserved his name; he was the only savage I ever saw having such a prominent stomach. He concealed under the folds of a red jacket the extreme fatness of his arms and chest.

Ouachinka-Lâgri (Handsome Bird) came also to Nion-Chou, and announced that, according to his habit, he would not mingle with the other Osage during the hunt. He promised to join us at the Red Cedar⁶⁰ or to go to the Great Saline with us and trade with the Patoka.⁶¹ This news surprised no one.

I asked Mr. Papin for explanations concerning the trading Ouachinka-Lâgri had just talked about. The Osage, after waging a cruel war with the Patoka, finally had started to establish those friendly relations which the interests of both nations seemed to require. On one hand, the Osage were dealing with a more powerful and more numerous nation than their own, and, during the wars they had fought against it, they were in such anxiety that very often when they knew the Patoka were in the field around the Arkansas they changed the usual direction of their hunts in order not to cross this river, for on the other side they would be in a continuous state of warfare; during their hunts the enemy lying in ambush would suddenly attack them and scalp a great number. On the other hand, for two years the relations between the Patoka, who are quite nomadic, and the whites, particularly the Texans, were broken, and the savages were no longer able to obtain any of the things manufactured by the whites.⁶² Therefore, they sought the friendship of the Osage, who had such frequent and easy dealings with the civilized people and obtained without difficulty what the Patoka

⁶⁰ *Cèdre Rouge* in Tixier. See also n. 15, p. 248, *infra*.

⁶¹ Comanches.—TIXIER. [References for these Indians will appear later at appropriate points in the narrative. So likewise for the Red Cedar and the Great Saline. Tixier's *Patoka* is simply a variant of *Padouca*.]

⁶² Some account of the relations between the Texans and the Comanche will be found in Grant Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, 269 ff. See also W. S. Nye, *Carbine and Lance*, *passim*.

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needed. Trading was started after the war; every year the day of the full moon in July is the meeting time for the two nations. The Osage bring red paint, kitchen utensils, blankets, cloth, iron, and the Patoka give in return horses which they breed, mules stolen from the Texans, all kinds of pelts, etc.

When the hatchet was buried, the braves of both nations agreed on a rallying sign which would enable the Osage and the Patoka to recognize each other. This took place two years ago; but an Osage Chief, Sans Oreilles,⁶³ a traitor if there ever was one, met during the spring of 1840 two Patoka who were among a party of Pawnee-Maha parleying with the Pawnee-Pict,⁶⁴ killed them, and scalped them in spite of their signs. This event gave Mr. Papin great anxiety over the meeting which was to take place at the Great Saline; but his mind was made up to face anything in order to see the Patoka, with whom he was supposed to negotiate the exchange of a Texan girl, their prisoner.⁶⁵ Ouachinka-Lâgri had expressed some fears of reprisals which the Patoka might attempt during the trading meeting, returning, in the manner of the savages, treason for treason.

"You know," Mr. Papin said to us after the Chief's departure, "that I have a glass eye; it is not quite the same color as my good eye, but I do not mind it; it does not bother me and that is all I want. For a long time after losing the one I lack, I kept showing my empty socket and the Osage were used to seeing me like this. All my friends in Saint Louis insisted upon my

⁶³ Is this possibly the Sans Oreilles who figures so largely in the account of Pike's Expedition from Saint Louis to the Osage villages? Consult index to Coues' edition. Bradbury and Brackenridge met him at Fort Osage in 1811 (see the latter's *Journal*, 1816 edition, 49-50). Apparently he signed, at least, the treaties of 1815 and 1818.

⁶⁴ Pâniés-Piqués, Tixier wrote it. For them see n. 11, p. 223, *infra*.

⁶⁵ Who this girl might be is uncertain. Possibly Matilda Lockhart, who with Rhoda, Elizabeth, Julia, and James Putnam, was captured by the Comanches in 1838. Matilda, thirteen or fourteen years old when captured, was recovered after several years; Rhoda became the wife of an Indian and refused to return (J. M. Willbarger, *Indian Depredations in Texas*, 1-4). Eventually all the Putnam children were restored to their relations. Willbarger lists many other episodes before 1840.

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going to the city, where since my mother's death⁶⁶ I had decided never to return, because I like living in Nion-Chou and because I would have found sorrowful memories there, everywhere. In short, I had not been there for nine years when one day Major Chouteau came and took me back with him. After spending two months with my family, I came back with two eyes which moved almost in the same manner, with the difference, however, that the glass eye is somewhat lazy. The Osage did not recognize me at first, and they examined me for a long time and asked me one day, 'Where did you get this eye?' I answered that I had bought it and that it had been placed under my eyelid. 'But who was willing to sell you his eye?' After many inquiries and much thought they at last reached the conclusion that I saw with this glass eye, and their only objection was that this new eye was not the same color as the former, to which I answered 'Why, of course, since it is not the same.' And they said 'This is true.' Then Ouachinka-Lâgri, whom you have just seen, and Ishta-ska (White Eye), who has one eye, begged me to take them to Saint Louis in order to have the one, a good leg, the other, a good eye, set back again.

"I unwillingly kept them in ignorance, for when I am hunting with the nation I never take out my eye, so that any hour of the day or night it is in its place like the former one, and as I have very good sight they believe all I said to them."

Beside me a blind young man was sitting. "This poor devil," Mr. Papin said to me, "wishes his eyes might be changed. He is a young Pawnee who was made a prisoner when only a child, and whom the Osage have adopted. He became blind through illness, but there is no danger lest he lose his direction in the woods, whereas *you white people*, he would say, are not even capable of crossing a small point in a straight line, not even your frontier dragoons, who go astray when they have twenty

⁶⁶ Marie Louise (Chouteau) Papin died in Saint Louis February 27, 1817.

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miles to travel across the prairie. Two have tried, but nothing doing—one was found starved to death a week later, and the other very sick, his stomach quite empty.

"Just the same it is irksome⁶⁷ to die in such a way. No joking, it has happened more than once. You will be careful not to go out of your way on the prairie, for the Pawnee always follow the tracks of the Osage, and if you happened to lose your direction you might very well be in need of a wig when going home, even if your bones do not remain in the desert; do not take this matter lightly."

Then, pointing to Suisse, one of the half-breeds who were coming along with us to the hunt, "This fellow will tell you that it was much more dangerous formerly." As a matter of fact, this man's father was employed as hunter in a trading fort built on the Verdigris River. The cannons did not frighten the redskins enough to prevent them from coming and killing white men within a gunshot. Suisse, having gone a little distance with a friend, was killed and scalped. A month after this happened, some Osage came to the fort and set out on the tracks of the murderers; they followed them to their village and brought back two scalps with the names of the murderers.⁶⁸

One does not know whether one should better admire the audacity and the rapidity of such attacks, which did not leave any time for bringing help to the victims, or the skill and perseverance with which other savages followed a track a month old—all the more difficult to follow as the grass had grown since. There are extraordinary examples of the sensitiveness of the or-

⁶⁷ *Tannant*, the word in the original, has no exact equivalent in English.

⁶⁸ In the *Baptismal Records of the Osage Nation*, I find, among a number of persons baptized in Saint Louis about 1820, a Joseph Suisse, apparently an adult. I find also a Jean Baptiste Le Suis and a François Le Suis, both the children of Joseph Le Suis and l'Ainée (for the first, Liguest P. Chouteau stood as godfather; for the second, François Chouteau); the birth year for both children is given as 1813. On January 14, 1834, was born Joseph Swiss (baptized 1841), the son of Joseph Swiss and Julie Mongrain.

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gans of these primitive people, who can see, smell, and hear things that we advanced and civilized people cannot perceive.

In the meanwhile, time for the departure approached. The plans of the expedition had been decided: it was agreed upon that the Osage would leave their villages individually and would get together in a general camp on the Verdigris River;⁶⁹ but we knew already that Ouachinka-Lâgri would go by himself and that the Little Osage probably would go their own way.

From the Verdigris we were to go toward the northwest until we arrived among the buffalo;⁷⁰ then go straight to the west on the warpaths and from there go to the Great Saline to trade with the Patoka; finally, after trading, come back to the villages for the corn harvest toward August 10 or 15.

There were not enough Osage left in the houses to defend them in case of aggression. Those who remained were too poor, too old, or too sick to go hunting; and as it frequently happens that bands of enemies come and burn the villages during the inhabitants' absence, the Osage removed the mats which covered the hut roofs and put in safe places whatever they could not take along with them. They left their guns in Mr. Papin's house, after putting them out of commission by removing the plates, which they hid somewhere else.

At one end of every village there was a cache made with pieces of wood tied tightly together, apparently without any opening. They placed the mats and the bark covering their houses in this cache. They buried the more valuable things in secret places known only to those who had dug them. The village now showed mere skeletons of houses, within which one

⁶⁹ An Osage trail, as located by James R. Mead, started from the Verdigris River near the junction of the Fall River in the southern part of Wilson County, ran northwest to Walnut River (near the present town of Eldorado, Butler County), then went to reach the Arkansas a few miles above the present town of Wichita. ("Explanation of Map," 577.)

⁷⁰ *Au boeuf*, in the original.

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saw the inhabitants with their dogs and the packs of their horses.⁷¹ A few families left on that same evening; a greater number waited until the next day.

During the last evening we spent in Nion-Chou, Mr. Papin gave us some warnings. He advised us once more not to go away from the Osage and especially never to retrace our steps to a former camp; for the Pawnee constantly followed the tracks of the Osage during the day and we would have run the risk of meeting an enemy detachment. We were supposed also, after crossing the Arkansas River, to walk with great caution to avoid the rattlesnakes, which are extremely common on those prairies. Every year during the summer hunting, these reptiles caused fatalities; they wounded horses, who died a few hours later. It

⁷¹ A quarter of a century earlier, Jules De Mun entered in his "Journal" (191-93, 195) a description that is worth reproducing for its detail: "At four o'clock we arrived at the Osage village which we found deserted, all having left twelve days ago to hunt. . . . After having made a short halt to await those of our men who had remained behind, I started ahead and at the end of a good league I arrived at the *Cache des Vieilles*. . . . Whenever the inhabitants of the village go off on a hunt they put their corn in some place removed from the woods where they think there is less risk of its being discovered by their enemies and they leave one or two old men and all the old women of the village to guard the cache; one must see such an assembly in order to get any idea of it, walking corpses, decrepits, most of them blind in one eye or almost blind, and just as squalid as it is possible to be. In the lodge where I found A[uguste], there was a young woman who had remained to look after her husband who was sick. As soon as the latter had offered me his hand his wife placed before us bowls filled with crushed corn boiled in water but barely cooked; she also sent some to our men, who had just arrived with the loads. Having eaten nothing all day, I appeased my hunger with this sort of pap which under other circumstances I could not have looked at without turning my stomach. At nightfall and rain threatening, we had everything which ran risk of getting wet put in the lodges, and we decided to sleep here. The men and horses crossed the Marmiton on which river the cache was located and camped on the opposite bank. The cache consisted of five lodges, two large and three small ones. In the one where we are lodged there are two fires and it is impossible to stand up in it owing to the smoke. We lay down midst a dozen old carcasses who in order to alleviate the itching caused by the vermin, scratched their emaciated bones with corn-cobs, and it was to the sound of this sweet music that I fell asleep. . . . This cache [a second one] consists of five lodges whose inhabitants appear far more clean than those at the Marmiton and these are nearly all young women who belong to the families of the Chiefs; everything is also much more comfortable than at the other cache both as to food and convenience of the lodges."

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seldom happened that one or two men did not die the victims of these frightful creatures.

One Osage Indian, lying on his blanket, was sleeping in these prairies with his hand on his chest, when he was awakened by the contact of something cold which moved. He opened his eyes and saw a rattlesnake whose hideous head was already on his chest; a savage never gets excited, and, following this great principle of the redskins, the Osage waited. When the rattlesnake was within reach, he suddenly seized its neck and threw it away; then he went back to sleep quietly. What courage! To think, when facing an awful death, that the best way of avoiding it was to wait patiently, remove the danger with skill, and, controlling an emotion which must have been violent, then go back to sleep without changing his place! In this wild setting man passes with hardly a transition from an extraordinary activity to the deepest apathy, from a dreadful emotion to the most complete indifference.

VII. THE PRAIRIE

BURIAL MOUNDS—BURIALS ON THE PRAIRIE—APPEARANCE OF THE PRAIRIES—CAMPING—LODGES—CARP FISHING—HORSES—DOGS—SONG OF TEARS—DEPARTURE—JOURNEY—ATTIRE OF THE OSAGE WOMAN—KANGAS AND COLTS—HORSEMEN—DEER HUNT—DIVISION INTO SHARES—THE WARRIORS WHEN CAMPING—OPINION OF THE OSAGE ON WHITE WOMEN—CHARACTER OF THE OSAGE—WAR LODGES—ELECTION OF A PARTISAN CHIEF—A TRACK—EVENING HARANGUE—FRIGHT—A SHOWER—NAMES—MUSIC, GAMES, CURIOUS FEATURES—LOVE—OSAGE CIVIL CODE—CHESS—PORTRAITS—THE AR-KANSAS

ON JUNE 4 before daybreak we were in our saddles on our way toward the northwest. We passed near a crumbling house built on a hill overlooking Nion-Chou. It had been inhabited by Major Chouteau.¹ But after an epidemic of smallpox which determined the Osage to have themselves vaccinated, the house was burnt down, for several people had died in it. Two brick columns were still standing and seemed to proclaim the hatred of the redskins for civilization.

We arrived at the burial mounds. The tombs were under a small mound in the shape of an altar. No decoration was to be seen—not one green or dry bough. They seemed abandoned. And yet the savages gave me many a proof of their respect for burial places. I have often seen a warrior or a woman in tears leave the ranks of the procession and, uttering heart-rending cries, walk to an unknown mound sheltering the bones of a

¹ The time of the episode and the location of the house are both uncertain, but we know that Paul Liguest Chouteau was living here nearly twenty-five years earlier. De Mun refers several times to "Liguest's Village" on the right bank of the Nion-cho (a version of the name of this river mid-way between that of Tixier and that of Corm Lambert). See his "Journal," 196, 315.

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dead friend or relative and place on the grave a cut of deer to satisfy the dead one's hunger, a necklace to make him a new ornament, or weapons with which he will hunt in the land of the ghosts.

I have often seen an old woman on horseback, while scrutinizing the horizon, suddenly assume a pensive expression when she recognized at a distance a mound which we were not even able to see; I have seen her dismount and, taking her offering in her hands, begin to sing and cry. She let the others go on their way and went alone, risking her life, to the grave she was looking for. Then I was told that this woman had lost her daughter during the last hunting expedition. The poor mother came back the next day; she had spent the night on her child's grave and she had heard her bones move under the ground as if to thank her.

Such grief appears only when this pious duty is going to be accomplished and disappears when the eye cannot see the place where the beloved bodies are lying. But who knows what is taking place in the hearts of these people, who can control expressions on their faces so perfectly.²

Arrived on top of the hill of tombs, I saw the prairie, a huge sea of grass spotted with islands of woods, where a series of round hills rise like waves. A hill, a plain cut by a river with wooded banks, then plains, hills, and more plains as far as the horizon. A vague, sad emotion filled my heart at the sight of this solitude. The prairie is wide and bare; it is a green desert which often, like the red plains of sand, has neither trees, nor water, nor shade nor freshness. The prairies which extend to the Arkansas River have tall grass, and fine forests where creepers and horse beans grow in dense thickets; they are still fertile

² Tixier wrote *Mont-des-Tombeaux* as if it were the name of a place, but it was apparently nothing more than the burial mounds commonly located outside any village.

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on the banks of the rivers. But beyond the Arkansas the land does not allow enough grass to grow to hide the sand which covers it; huge naked places bear here and there yellow cacti with thousands of points. The banks of the rivulets, which flow on a bottom of sand between two banks of sand, have only a few stunted trees and sparse bushes; and on the prairies without wood the rivers have no shade, and the land is nothing but dust. Here one finds nothing to make a fire except the dry dung of the bison.

After covering twenty-five miles, which seemed to me as many leagues,³ we arrived at the Verdigris River, a pretty tributary of the Arkansas, into which it flows two miles above Fort Gibson a short distance from the mouth of the Nion-Chou.⁴ The forest which grows on its banks is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. The beautiful trees which border it will probably fall soon under the Yankee axes.

Hunting lodges had been erected in a bend of the stream. Water and wood were near at hand. Mr. Papin chose a location for his lodge some distance from the village, and on this very place the horses were unloaded and set free after their forelegs had been fastened with *enfergés* or horse locks. The women of the lodge kept one horse and went to the woods; they came back with a load of stakes; these were long, pliable branches measuring about twelve feet. They were planted in the ground in two rows, forming six arches joined to one another by long branches tied on them at right angles. Five buffalo skins spread out formed the bottom and covered the luggage, which had been placed there already. The same number of skins served us

³ If they went to the point on the Verdigris indicated in n. 69, p. 54, *supra*, they must have traveled at least thirty miles. They were probably in the southern part of Wilson County.

⁴ The Verdigris River rises in the southeastern part of Chase County, Kansas (southwest of Emporia), flows southeast and south through Kansas and south through Oklahoma to join the Arkansas in Muskogee County just above the Neosho.

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as a cylindrical roof; the whole thing was strongly fixed to the slight framework. We had then a lodge four feet and a half high, fifteen feet long, and about seven feet deep. It received air and light from both ends and from the front. The architects of these lodges, the Indian women, never deviate from a fundamental principle which makes them expose the front of the structures to the east, however hot the sun. Their aim is to protect them from the rain, which is always brought by the west wind.⁵

In the evening our camp was composed of two hundred lodges, fifteen hundred men, the same number of dogs, and three thousand horses. During the day the horses grazed at liberty on the prairie; each lodge had its herd watched by a young Osage *kanga* who led it to the watering place, washed each animal carefully, and brought back the herd to the pasture. The young warriors, after having eaten, had taken their weapons and had set out to hunt. We did likewise. I went along the river, hoping to kill some wild turkeys or find tracks to follow, but the Osage had preceded me; a white hunter who comes after them has not much chance of shooting any game. Not finding anything on land, I thought of the Verdigris River, where I saw big carp showing their backs while trying to swim up some rapids. Some young men, standing in the water higher than their knees, their bows in their hands, pierced the carp with arrows as soon as they showed themselves. The wounded fish swam away very swiftly, but the darts which protruded from their bodies soon betrayed their shelter. The young savages brought them to the shore and left them there; the Osage never eat fish.

After watching the hunt with great interest, I came back to the camp. The women had dug out the fireplaces in front of the

⁵ Cf. James Owen Dorsey, "Omaha Dwellings, Furniture, and Implements," *Thirteenth Annual Report, Bureau of American Ethnology*, 271.

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lodges so that the wind could not blow smoke into them. Stakes supported the pots in which dried meat from the preceding winter was cooking. This meat, cut in thin strips, had been braided and dried; when one wants to cook it, he must break it, which is done with difficulty, for it is as tough as leather. It is cooked for half an hour in water before it is served. It is hard to imagine how bad this awful meat can be. Besides being extremely tough, it has a pronounced rancid taste. I had made up my mind not to be repelled by anything, and my appetite, sharpened by a long walk in the open, greatly helped my resolution. I gnawed a long piece of braided meat and managed not to leave any of my teeth in it. One can get used to anything: later, I was able to eat this tough meat with pleasure, when nothing else was available. The meat course was followed by the same fritter which at Mr. Papin's house was made with fine flour, and Sophie gave us a cup of *manka-sabéh*.

The black medicine thus given to us was for digestive purposes, I am inclined to believe, for it was quite different from the delicious drink we have in France. The Osage who visited our country did not recognize our coffee to be the same thing as the prairie *manka-sabéh*. I was surprised to find I was still hungry after such a substantial meal; my companions as well as I, during our trip on the prairies, were always ready to eat. This enabled us to enjoy the Osage hospitality in the proper way. The reader will not be surprised to hear me talk about people's appetites, meals, meats, all things which have to do with food, when he is reminded that the Osage go hunting in order to provide themselves with food for the season they spend in their villages, as well as to feed themselves abundantly during the summer. The appetite of the Osage is prodigious, as I shall have the opportunity of proving later; it is, therefore, natural to tell of all those things which were the main preoccupation of our kind hosts. It is a reproach generally addressed to travelers that they

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are constantly speaking of such things: the reader who is not worrying about his next meal will see later that I have not always been so confident about the matter.

Our lodge included many a hungry mouth: Mr. Papin, his wife, their son Edouard, my three companions, Ouichinghêh, the cook, her daughter Angami, and Mina-Pichêh; Vitimé (some sort of charwoman, the most untidy creature I ever saw), the two young half-breeds, Julien and Laforce; Bahabêh, the Indian whose feet had been frozen, and Kansé-Tanga (Big Kan), so named because he had lived so long among the Kon-sans or Kans; these were the inhabitants of the lodge. Thirteen people slept every night in a place fifteen feet long. Big Kan and Vitimé spent the night in another lodge.

After sunset the horses were brought back and tied in front of the huts. The hunters were given a tether just long enough to allow them to lie down, and the knot was such that it could not slide down; the horse could turn around the stake without twisting his rope, and if he was scared, which happened sometimes, and tore the peg out, the knot would slip over and the horse, free from its tether, could run without risk of breaking his legs.

During the evening we gathered around the fire, wrapped in our blankets and smoking in the Osage style. Baptiste made us the honor of a visit, and a discussion arose between him and Mr. Papin on the merits of their horses. Baptiste claimed he owned the best racers in the nation; Mr. Papin stated his were excellent. They began to bet, the one for Bunker, the other for his Grand-Caille.⁶ A race was organized, but we are still waiting for it to take place. On the prairies they talk a great deal about horse racing in the presence of a whole nation; and yet it is seldom that the best horses are engaged to race. One warrior would be afraid of losing his wager; others avoid endangering

⁶ Piebald horse. The Osage are very much intrigued by these horses.—TIXIER.

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the reputation of their race-horses. Only mediocre horses run races; but people bet for or against famous racers who never run.

When we were covered with our blankets, our heads leaning against our bags, and we lay down on buffalo-skins, our day was not over. New enemies assailed us. The Osage dogs, a mixed race which looks as much like wolves as dogs, howled like wolves without ever barking. These dogs are shaped like wolves; their tails are long-haired, their ears are straight, their eyes, often gray, are piercing and fierce-looking. Their size varies between that of a wolf and a fox. These animals, which are allowed to multiply, are almost articles of luxury and they have no proven usefulness.

They never leave the lodges; in the village they live by preying and on what they can steal. Since they are never given anything to eat, they are frightfully thin. At the beginning of a hunt, they are timid and sad-looking during the day; but at night their boldness is great; they prowl in the camp and make a prey of everything that can be chewed. They attack the lodges in the back, at the places where the dried meat is stocked; they raise the skins if they are not tied fast; otherwise, they dig underground, pull the bundles out, tear them open, and devour the contents. If they do not succeed in deceiving the watchful savages, they take moccasins, bridles, saddles, and leave nothing but the iron and wooden parts. Later, during the expedition, after gorging themselves with fresh meat, they become very audacious and bite people day and night. Many are seen going mad, and it is necessary to kill a great many. There are constant battles in the camp for a bone or a female. During the night they attack everybody, but especially those who do not wear the costume of the savages, who are protected against bites by their long blankets. Therefore the best way of protecting oneself is to have a blanket when going out, and to crouch as soon as one hears them howl. This is, however, far from being infal-

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lible, and I have known of many an unfortunate person whose legs were cruelly bitten.

The dogs, then, paid us frequent visits during the night. Sometimes they entered our lodge, walking over us, which brought them severe beatings. Sometimes pulling our bridles and saddles from under the skins, or moving our bundles, they awakened us again; but before we could punish them as they deserved, these night thieves, alarmed by the faintest noise, would be already out of reach.

I found my bed rather hard and was not able to go to sleep immediately. I watched the lodges illuminated by the flickering light of dying fires, the marauding dogs passing like furtive shadows or, rather, skeletons, and young warriors looking for some sentimental adventure.

It was not yet daylight when I was awakened by unusual cries. I thought, at first, that some misfortune had happened. I was wrong: the wailers were singing a monotonous tune, a few words which they repeated constantly and among which the word "*tséht-houka*" recurred frequently: so the matter was the bison or buffalo. This religious song was addressed to the Great Spirit (*Oua-Kondah*) to ask of him a good hunt and to avert the wrath of the Evil Spirit. This supplication was accompanied by abundant tears.

The Osage wail with a religious purpose; it is a prayer in which they expose before the Master of Life their pains and their needs, sometimes also addressed to the Evil Spirit, when the suppliant dreads some misfortune. For instance, the warriors who are to take part in an expedition tearfully beseech the Evil Spirit. They hope to be spared, through fasting and prayers, the death which threatens them. They believe that those privations they force on themselves will appease the anger of the Evil One, and that they will thus be able to return to their lodges safe and sound.

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This song of tears,⁷ if I may call it that, has its fixed rules; the men begin their loud praying long before daylight, but the women are allowed to sing only when the men have finished. They wail at any time during the day but especially in the morning in the lodges. During the day they sing while riding on horseback or in camp at some distance from the huts. Tears necessarily accompany fasting, or the smearing with clay: but a wailer is not obliged to fast. They usually cry several days in succession when they have made such a vow, but there are tearful songs which are heard only after an accident.

When an Osage dies, his relatives wail for some time in front of his lodge; then they go to announce their loss to their friends; they arrive at the house perfectly composed, but as soon as they reach the door they utter three loud cries and begin the song of tears with an accompaniment of sobs. The following days they cry over the deceased with more regularity.

Many times I have seen our cook Ouichinghêh stop working and crouch comfortably in front of our lodge; after some preliminaries, she started her song in a very low tone; she gradually sang more excitedly, her voice growing louder, her breathing irregular, her eyes filled with tears, her body trembling; she uttered ear-splitting cries and big tears rolled down her cheeks. She reached a condition of extreme excitement and sang with frenzy. She seemed to have become insane, but little by little she grew more calm, wiped her tears and resumed her work.

The savages do not succeed immediately in wailing perfect-

⁷ This custom has been commented upon by practically all travelers among the Osage. See, for example, Brackenridge, *Journal*, 55-56; Bradbury, *Travels*, 63-64; Pike, *Expeditions* (Coues, ed.), II, 367-68; Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 303-305; Nuttall, *Journal*, 244. The most amusing reference to the weeping of the Osage is in a note of Bradbury's: "I have been informed, that when the Osages were in the habit of robbing the white settlers, it was customary with them, after they had entered the house, and before they proceeded to plunder, to blacken their faces, and cry. The reason they gave for this was, that they were sorry for the people whom they were going to rob." (*Op. cit.*, 64.)

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ly. It takes much practice and training to become a good wailer. Young children begin very early; one can often see little girls getting together to improve in this respect. They concentrate all their faculties, excite their imaginations, and reach a feverish exaltation which appears like the ecstasy of religious fanatics. It is a sort of frenzy which comes to them and leaves them at will.

As soon as the day broke one of the old men, the herald of the camp, gave the order to fold the lodges. Immediately great activity was displayed. The male and female wailers were as cheerful as the others; in a few moments the horses were saddled and loaded, and the Osage were in their saddles. There remained only some smoldering coals among the skeletons of lodges. The camp became again the desert it had been.

The savages drew up in a long file, the horses of each lodge following one another. The warriors on horseback were riding out of the ranks in small groups. Scouts, who amused themselves by running after deer, were scattered at considerable distances from one another on the prairie. The Osage women had dressed with special care. The girls had tied their hair with red ribbons of wool, and wore bright-colored blouses, scarlet skirts, and blankets, with blue *mitas* embroidered with yellow and white. Some had the parts in their hair and the areas around their ears painted red; but this painting of the women does not mean anything among the Osage, and many women of the nation who do not use any color are nevertheless "painted women."⁸

The warriors were riding their best hunters. The bridles of scarlet cloth were heavy with little bells. From the necks of the horses, adorned with a multi-colored band, was suspended a larger bell. Their saddle-ties of fringed, tooled leather were or-

⁸ This is a carefully explained pun. In the text Tixier used *filles peintes*; in a footnote, *femmes de mauvaise vie*.

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namented with little bells. Only the hunters of established reputation wore eagle feathers on their foreheads and tails.

We rode beside the procession, looking with interest at these things so new to us. There were infants surrounded by newborn pups too young to walk, placed among bundles on a large horse; farther on, we saw tightly fastened to a pack-horse a carved and painted board with a hoop adorned with bells around which a light cloth was stretched. This board was a cradle in which cried or slept a future warrior or a beauty who would some day be the glory and the pride of the nation.

I gazed with admiration at the naked, bold little *kangas*. These hardy children could be no more than five or six years old, and yet they were riding bare-back on yearlings, guiding them with a rope passing through their mouths. The small horses kicked, moved nervously about, pranced; the little horsemen prodded with their heels and clung to their mounts. Nothing could be more amusing than the skill and coolness of these little rascals who always succeeded in mastering their colts after several falls.

The Osage learn to ride from earliest infancy: they become surprisingly expert. They are able to hide themselves behind their horses at full gallop. At war, they escape the arrows of their enemies by concealing themselves so adroitly behind the flanks of their beasts that they show only one foot. At play, they gallop bare-back with bridles hanging loose, and lean so far over that one would think they were going to lose their balance. They shoot their arrows with surprising accuracy from this awkward position. It is seldom that they fall down, and when they do they never lose their horses, for, besides the Spanish bridle, which is released in the fall of the rider, the animals have around their necks a long horse-hair tether, which ends in a huge knot; the coils, which unroll easily, are passed around the rider's belt. When falling, the savage grasps the tether, but

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lets it slip in his hand until the knot is at the end. The horse can go far enough not to hurt his master, who soon stops him with a slip knot around the horse's neck.

The feet cannot be held by the wooden stirrups made in the Moorish style, which are too small to let them in completely. The stirrup leathers are very short. The saddles fashioned by the savages themselves have two frames, each one made from a forked branch held together on each side by two wooden cross-pieces. The frames have their upper ends curving, one forward, the other backward, supporting a loose strap on which the rider sits. This frame is covered with a deer-skin folded several times, and some Indians adorn it with a bison-skin, tanned and whitened, embroidered with ornaments painted red, black, and green. The saddle-tie starts from the rear part of the frame, passes under the horse's tail, encircling the buttocks, and reaches the other side. Then, the belly-band is quite plain and is fastened with very tight knots. The Osage jump on their horses off-side. Women as well as men ride astride, and once in their saddles they are literally encased between the two frames, to which the warriors fasten their kits, bows, arrows, shields, and the products of the hunt.

Wide bands of embroidered scarlet cloth adorn the bridle, which has no throat band, and support a Spanish bit, to which are tied reins of red cloth or embroidered and painted skin as wide as those of the ancient knights.

The savage rider, before mounting, girds himself tightly with his blanket. He is careful to leave the upper part long enough to cover his head and protect his gun from the rain.

An Indian on horseback is indeed a fine sight. The steed, with each movement of his head or tail, waves the eagle feathers, which are the marks of his merits, and shakes his thousand little bells. The horseman seems to be one with his mount; his

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scalp lock, adorned with a red mane of flowers of *tchéra-ouas*,⁹ stands out above the white or red blanket. On his back swing the shield, either in its case of painted skin or showing its paintings and its long crane feathers, and the kit of cougar skin adorned with the tail of the animal. At his belt hang the dreadful scalping knife and the tomahawk. Such is the Osage horseman, who also brandishes a gun or the long forked staff which he uses to master wild horses. But if he needs the full speed of his horse, all his skill and all his strength, he casts away the arms, which would hinder his movements.

A few deer were seen quite a distance away, and about a hundred hunters rushed after them; an hour later several had been run down or killed. It seems unbelievable, at first, that the Osage horses, which do not run particularly fast, are able to run down a deer, an antelope, or a Canadian stag; but it will be more easily understood when one perceives that these animals run for a little while, then stop to look at their pursuers, start again, then stop; moreover, they do not run in a straight line, but make many turns. Hunters are well aware of this fact, and they scatter over a wide area to stop the animal: the latter runs into a horseman. As the deer turns away from the first, the second hunter goes after him. The poor stag loses his head, and, soon surrounded, is killed with a bullet or an arrow from a very short distance.

He dies shedding many tears. The hunters dismount and designate by touching it the part of the beast they want. Whether or not he ran after it, anyone present is entitled to the part of his choice. Often the one who killed the animal receives the least desirable piece; he will make up for it some other time. Let one Osage come across another Osage carrying a deer or an antelope on his back; if he wants venison, he will stop the hunter without any ceremony and point to the animal without

⁹ Racines percées.—TIXIER.

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saying anything; the hunter will throw his burden on the ground and let the other man take half the animal, if the latter wants it.

The heralds ordered a halt after a ride of fifteen miles.¹⁰ When we stopped to camp, a flock of wild turkeys came out of a wood in front of us and made a long flight across the prairie. Our Osage galloped in pursuit, reaching the turkeys, which had walked for some time already. They flew again and, after alighting, tried to run away, but the Osage reached them finally and killed about ten.

We camped; everybody sought a comfortable place. The warriors gave their horses to the women, sat down, and lighted their calumets. The women unloaded the horses and carried the packs some distance away, in order to have enough room for their horses in front of the lodges. They then went to cut pegs for the lodges; when they came back, their first care was to plant two poles in the ground on which they stretched a blanket to protect their warriors from the sun. When the lodges were built, the men lay down in the shade. The women dug holes to build a fire, brought some dry wood and water. Then they began to cook while the sleeping warriors were seeking to evoke pleasant omens in their dreams.

Altogether they showed little consideration for the women. While Vitimé and Ouichinghêh prepared the dinner, I thought of such customs as these, so different from ours. All the savages consider women inferior beings, and yet they have some regard for them, because they are indispensable to them and give birth to the warriors. The squaw builds the lodge, watches the baggage, receives from the hands of the brave his horse still saddled and laden, takes off the harness before letting the *kanga*

¹⁰ Tixier is quite vague as to distances and locations. If they had come only fifteen miles from the camp on the Verdigris, they were now on the line between Wilson and Elk Counties, Kansas.

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take the horse away to care for him. She brings up the children, cultivates corn, and engages in the same kinds of work a white workman would. The warrior's share is fighting, holding councils, hunting, dreaming, and smoking. He sells the pelts the women have prepared; he is the head, the women are the arms in the house.

The Osage do not understand our European customs, about which they have heard from those in their nation who went to Paris. They cannot imagine what charm resides in saving our *ouakaus* toil and hardships. "Look at ours," they said, "are they complaining: are they less happy than yours? You adorn your women more than yourselves. Only the warriors ought to be painted; you let women use on themselves the red paint of the braves." It appears that Big Soldier slandered our ladies; I should like to believe he found exceptions. "You live without leaving your villages: man should hunt for his life; you have no bison in your country." The Osage might have found in our country much more serious vices.¹¹

They do not believe the life of the white man can be happy. On the other hand, a great many whites do not understand the happiness of the redskins. Who can judge? Careless, forgetful, they sleep among dangers; but their senses, when it is necessary, warn them in time. Their skill, their tricks, make them triumphant. Their tastes are such as to suit their nature; their needs are limited. In times of abundance they show a brutal avidity, but when food is lacking they are satisfied with roots and never complain. In times of peace, they are exceedingly lazy; in war they are indefatigable. They will travel a hundred miles without eating, without stopping; happy, they are quiet; unhappy, they show greatness. Everybody knows how to die;

¹¹ For a correction of this quite usual misunderstanding on the part of visiting Europeans, see Hodge, *Handbook*, the articles, "Popular Fallacies: Division of Labor," II, 284-85, and "Women," II, 968-73.

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suicide is unheard of in their nation. If you disregard the extraordinary features of their customs, you will find that the redskins are great philosophers, who know how to control their needs and their most violent emotions.

Two large lodges had been built outside the camp. At the southern end of each one, long branches, still covered with leaves, had been planted to form a green bower; within, cuts of deer were broiling over a large fire. The one lodge, intended for the old warriors, was called the "Fire of the Old Men;" the other, full of younger men, was called the "Fire of the Braves," "*Nika-ouassa pedzéh*," or the war-lodge. So they represented experience and courage. These preparations were made for the election of a village partisan, who was to command the hunt.

A messenger came to invite us to take part in the banquet given at the war-lodge, where the old and the young had gathered together. We scarcely had wiped our knives on the grass after the meal when another messenger, armed with a tomahawk, called by name all the warriors of the village, who went to assemble at the "Fire of the Old Men." We followed them and partook of another banquet. The laden spits followed one another: a broiled deer belly preceded a delicious roast; then a half-cooked boiled cut was served. If one was thirsty one cried, "*Nhi!*" (Water!) and a *lapânic*¹² brought around a full bucket, its rim soon to be covered with fat solidified by the cold water. This is the other side of the beauty of primitive customs.

After eating, we smoked. Ax calumets, red and black calumets, white pipes, cigars, and cigarettes were gathered around the council fire.¹³ The warriors collected their thoughts as old White Hair called the meeting to order. Some other old men spoke. Several candidates were suggested, and Chonkêh, the

¹² Marmiton.—TIXIER. [See n. 6, p. 118, *supra*.]

¹³ For different kinds of calumets, see Hodge, "Pipes," *Handbook*, II, 257-60, and the references there listed.

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Chief whom we had seen at Mr. Edouard's farm, was appointed Partisan. He was the owner of a lodge of fourteen skins and had a herd of horses. He offered enough guaranties in case of some unexpected event. The heralds announced that power had been put into the hands of Chonkêh.

Before speaking of the obligations of a partisan, I think I ought to say something about the Osage constitution. The whole nation recognizes a hereditary Head Chief to whom all the chiefs owe obedience. This individual is an absolute sovereign, but he knows in certain cases how to forget his power. For instance, when a partisan undertakes a war expedition, he often enlists as a private warrior and willingly submits to the orders of the chief he has accepted; but he reserves the right to recover all his authority when he wants to do so. He obeys also the village partisan during the hunt; but if the partisan gives an order which is against the will of the Head Chief, the latter's will only is followed. Several times I saw Majakita revoke Chonkêh's orders, and always the orders of the Head Chief conformed to reason and prudence. He was never opposed to reasonable decisions.

The title of head of a village is also hereditary. Needless to say, the Salic law is enforced among the redskins. The chiefs are mere braves who are entitled to raise military detachments.

Finally, there are elected chiefs, called partisans. The Osage are perfectly free to obey either their natural or their elected chiefs. They may go from one village to another, or leave a hunting expedition. They may even exempt themselves from the authority of the Head Chief by leaving the nation.

All these chiefs are permanent except the village partisans, who can be removed from office and replaced by the council of old men and warriors.

The partisan becomes the highest chief of the band he commands, but for important decisions he must obtain the approval

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of the council of old men. His power lasts during the whole hunting season. The heads of villages, the partisans of war, the Head Chief submit to his orders. He cannot force any one to follow him, but those who stay with him tacitly approve his nomination. He is responsible for the village, decides upon the direction of its course, presides over the council, which he assembles when he finds it necessary; he looks out for the safety of the lodges, has the heralds announce to the people whatever alarming or reassuring news he wants to communicate. He has to determine the location for the camps, the length of the journeys, where to ford rivers, order the buffalo hunt,¹⁴ give the hunters equal chances, decide when to come back to the villages. Such are the duties of a partisan.

In order to fulfill this office, one must show himself responsible. One must be brave, prudent, crafty, wealthy. Why wealthy? Because a partisan, whoever he be, leading men at will, must hold himself responsible for the lives and fortunes of these men: and that is fair. The war partisan asks his men for victory and scalps. If the warriors do brilliant exploits, they earn new rights to the esteem of their brothers; but the glory attached to the expedition, the scalp, the wild horses, and the prisoners belong to the partisan. Likewise the village partisan is entitled to a piece of all the game killed. If the hunt is profitable, all the merit for the success is his. It is fair that the partisans who have the benefit of the undertaking should also bear the losses. If braves are killed, if they lose their horses, the partisan will replace the horses, will pay for the men, or be killed by the relations of the dead. If the horses in the village are stolen, if the enemy takes some scalps from the camp, the village partisan will pay for the horses and the men. The war partisan will have

¹⁴ In the text Tixier used the word *cerne*, which he explained in footnote as *chasse du bison*. An excellent account of the *cerne* will be found in Annie Heloise Abel's *Tabeau's Narrative of Loisel's Expedition to the Upper Missouri*, Appendix viii: "Le cerne ou chasse en commun," 245-48.

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to stand the shame of a defeat and the village partisan that of a poorly conducted expedition. It is the custom of the Osage.¹⁵

After that the soldiers who were to hold their functions after crossing the Arkansas River were appointed.¹⁶ Heralds chosen among the oldest warriors were charged with announcing every evening the probable dangers of the night, the time of departure, and the location of the following camp.

When the warriors had left the council fire, we took our guns, quickly separated from one another, and began to hunt in the wood. I did not find anything of importance for quite a while; but after walking through a thicket I saw a cougar, which the Creoles honor with the name of tiger. I shot at the animal, which was running away; it disappeared without waiting for my next shot. These beasts are supposed to be very ferocious. Mr. Papin told us about several fights he had with them. They must not be so very dangerous, for a Negro killed one with his knife and was wounded in only two or three places.

M. Guérin came back to the camp with four beautiful wood ducks,¹⁷ which we plucked with our hands and roasted. We wanted to reciprocate the politeness of our excellent Indian friends, who did come to our feast but did not want to eat any duck. Joseph and Baptiste did not touch it either, and they told us that the Osage never eat birds, small quadrupeds, or fish.

"For what reason?" I asked them. "Don't they want to?"

"Because it is not good."

"But if they have never eaten any, how can they know the taste?"

¹⁵ An interesting account of a partisan organizing a war-party, with all the incidental ceremonies of music and dance, will be found in a "Lettre du R. P. Charles Van Quicken Born [sic], de la Compagnie de Jesus, au R.P. Ros...de la même compagnie. Saint Ferdinand, le 10 mars 1829," *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, IV (No. XXIII, January, 1831), 573-76.

¹⁶ Although the word *soldier* is regularly used to denote this functionary, he might be more accurately described by the term *military policeman*.

¹⁷ *Canards branchus* in Tixier. See Read, *Louisiana-French*, 17-18.

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"It cannot be good. It is annoying to have these small bones in your mouth."

For such excellent reasons small animals are not included in the diet of the Osage.

While we were eating, surrounded by our guests, who were smoking, M. Guérin told us that while going far into the wood he had entered a thicket, after following a small path recently traced through broken branches; he had arrived at a rather large place, which had been trampled down. This interested Joseph; he asked for more details and translated to the Osage present what he had just found out. The Council assembled; they made inquiries and found that no hunter had gone in the direction M. Guérin had mentioned. At the Partisan's request, M. Guérin got on horseback accompanied by six of the bravest warriors and Joseph as an interpreter. The troop went toward the spot which had been pointed out, about four miles away from the lodge.

It was rumored in the camp that a Pawnee war detachment was hiding nearby and that their tracks had been detected. The late hour did not permit our scouts to see the tracks very well, so they had to postpone a more thorough examination until the next day. Extraordinary precautions were taken for the night; the heralds and the Partisan went around the lodges, and the evening harangue said: "Osage warriors, the tracks of the Pawnee have been seen, and Chonkêh is going to watch over your brothers; but as for you, watch out for your horses and your scalps. If you sleep, you may find tomorrow that your horses have been stolen, or you may remain asleep." We were told that on this same location, fifty horses had been stolen two years previously from Ouachinka-Lâgri, who had been wounded and returned to his village. His warriors went after the Pawnee and came back to the *maisons*¹⁸ with forty-five of the stolen horses and three scalps.

¹⁸ The permanent villages.—TIXIER.

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I do not know whether an excess of precaution frightened the horses: whether those men who continually passed among them to watch them excited them; at any rate there were symptoms of panic in the herd, and the Osage said, "The Pawnee have made a *medicine* to frighten the horses, and our horses are scenting the Pawnee."

A stampede is one of the most frightening things one can imagine. Several thousand horses break their shackles, run away neighing, kicking fires out, breaking up the lodges, and knocking people down. The children cry, the dogs howl in the dark. Such is a picture of a stampede. The next day the horses are gone, either lost or stolen. This is what threatened on that evening. Only a few horses, however, succeeded in pulling out the stake to which they were tied, but as they were tightly locked, they did not go far. As long as the panic lasted, the horses showed constantly increasing excitement; we managed to calm them by talking to them and stroking them, but the slightest noise frightened them again into a contagious panic, which soon was communicated to all the herds. None of the horses of our lodge escaped. We stayed up all night watching (as intently as the weak moonlight permitted) the runaway horses, which passed nearby on the prairie. We knew that the enemy excite a stampede on purpose in order to get hold of the horses more easily outside camp. We also knew that, by using certain well-prepared skins,¹⁹ they assume the appearance of various animals in entering the camp of their opponents.

Several times during the night we were visited by Man-chap-ché-mani. This brave Osage had a true passion for war; he prowled around the camp all night at the risk of being killed by mistake. He went with his ax and bow to some lower part

¹⁹ These skins are quite beautiful. They are called war skins. The feet, ears, and eyes are embroidered with porcupine hair; the inside is painted in various designs.—TIXIER.

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of the prairie and there watched everything, enabled by his location to see whatever was revealed by the weak light from the horizon. By staying on the watch in this manner, he once took three scalps in a hunting season. He has twelve in his *oiseau de guerre*.²⁰

The night was passed without any further disturbance, and the next day the scouts resumed their search. They recognized tracks of a moccasin, the strings of which were not passed under the sole. Therefore they were not the tracks of a Pawnee; some more tracks leading to the place which M. Guérin had described proved that young Osage had left them. Why then had they remained silent? This silence was a proof of wisdom and prudence and not dishonesty, for enemies might well have come to this place.

On our way we were threatened by a storm, but the lodges were built near a river called *La Pierre Glissante*²¹ before it started. During their walk, the savages showed no concern at all about the rain; they were certain to arrive before the rain started. Hardly had we encamped when a shower such as is unheard of in France began to fall. It had been expected, and the lodges had been made carefully. The ends and the front part were closed with thick skins, and ditches had been dug all around to prevent the water from flowing under them; this wise precaution protected our bed from humidity. The horses were tied together in front of the lodge; the wind changed its direction several times, driving the rain very strongly; at each change the horses turned their cruppers toward the wind, thus keeping their heads relatively sheltered.

It had become a necessity to study and practise the language of our hosts, for we could not make ourselves understood in

²⁰ The war-bird was generally kept carefully put away in the war-pack. See n. 7, p. 217, *infra*.

²¹ There are Gypsum Creeks in Oklahoma and Kansas, but none of these is in such a position that it could be *La Pierre Glissante*.

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French or in English. Mr. Papin was often too busy, and the interpreters were far from always being ready to help. We had, then, to speak the Osage language with the constant help of a dictionary. I was beginning to make myself understood decently enough, with the help of many gestures, and to understand the language myself, when I had the notion of finding out by what names or nicknames we were known by the Osage, since they could not pronounce French. These names were derived from our nationality and our physical appearance.

James, who was rather tall, received the name of *Ishta-jéh-granléh*, "the tall Frenchman;" M. Foureau, because of his tall stature, received the name *Ishta-jéh-tséh-tséh*, "the long Frenchman;" M. Guérin, in spite of his moderate corpulence, was *Ishta-jéh-tanga*, "the big Frenchman;" and I became *Ishta-jéh-chinka*, "the short Frenchman."²²

The Osage had not given up their habits for us. Their names are based on physical qualities, such as *Majakita*, "The Lips;" *Ishta-ska*, "White Eye;" *Kahikéh-tanga*, "Big Chief," etc., or from their habits and relations: *Kansé-tanga*, "The Big Kan;" *Man-chap-ché-mani*, "The-One-Who-Crawls-on-the-Ground;" or, from animals, *Chonkéh*, "The Wolf;" *Chabé-chinka*, "The Small Beaver." Sometimes they have quite arbitrary names such as: *Ta-ouan-li*, "Buffalo-Robe," "Small-Green-Horn," or are named through some resemblance: *Ouachôchéh* was nicknamed "Châtellerant" because he looked like a Frenchman of that name.²³

At nightfall, the heralds announced the *casséh-ouagnon*, or breaking-up of the camp for the next day. When we left, the warriors rode thirty horsemen abreast in two lines, and they sang war songs to an accompaniment of a sort of tambourine

²² These persons are all discussed in the Editor's Introduction.

²³ The French names of these Indians as Tixier gives them are: *La Babine*, *L'Oeil Blanc*, *Gros-Chef*, *le Gros-Kan*; *Celui-qui-rampe-à-la-terre*, *le Loup*, *le Petit Castor*, *la Robe-de-bison*, and *la Petite-corne-verte*.

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made of double skin. Two braves carried war spears. They were long staffs, provided on top with a wide band of red cloth, at the edges of which were fixed feathers alternately white and black. The points were long and sharp. At the camp the Indians sang some more. The warriors gathered by twos in front of a lodge; one began in intermediate tone a phrase of a few beats; then he stopped while the others repeated the same phrase; as soon as it was finished, the two singers began again together and finished their song in a barytone voice which became gradually lower. These songs are very monotonous; the tempo is sometimes fast, but it soon becomes slow again and the sound grows weaker at the end of the song. The couplets are short and the same words occur frequently. Each note is accented.²⁴ the sound of each one is loud in the beginning and decreases; it is a sort of breath. In camp they sing only after sunset. I heard women sing only once—it was during an absence of the braves.

These songs are evening prayers; they praise *Oua-Kondah*, or the exploits of the Osage warriors. Some, which are sung only by young men, are satires of women with bad reputations. On the prairies, as everywhere else, men cause the ruin of women and make fun of them afterwards. Sometimes they gather together and sing in concert.²⁵

More warriors came everyday from the villages; they were braves who were to follow the Partisan in his war expedition. In order to prepare for it they had been painting with clay and had been fasting for four days, letting their hair grow in sign of mourning. As soon as they arrived at the camp they washed themselves, shaved their hair with newly sharpened knives, took

²⁴ *Pique* in Tixier.

²⁵ The Smithsonian Institution (according to the *Forty-fifth Annual Report* of the Bureau of American Ethnology) has 1697 cylinders of Osage songs and rituals. In the various monographs of Francis La Flesche on the Osage Tribe will be found printed both music and words for many songs.

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some rest, and after washing carefully and painting their faces, ate some food.

Among the savages, the idea of war is always mixed with that of religion; for this reason they prepare themselves for such a religious activity by religious practices: they begin by fasting and weeping to appease the wrath of the Evil Spirit; then they sing to obtain the favor of the Great Spirit.

In the camp, some young warriors ran about in the woods seeking a sentimental tête-à-tête, others gathered together to play various games. They are particularly fond of a card game which is played somewhat like our game of marriage.²⁶ The Osage play the hand game such as Captain Bonneville²⁷ has seen played by the nations of the great plains and has described. Like all the savages, the Osage are wild gamblers. They lie down from morning till night around their cards, staking beads of porcelain at first, then their clothes, their horses, their houses, all their property.

The girls went to bathe in the cool water of the streams which ran through the woods; sometimes they were escorted by their parents, sometimes they were alone; but the young men came quickly and hid behind bushes to look at them at leisure.

²⁶ Cf. the Omaha as reported in E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 305-306: "The men devote a portion of their time to card-playing. Various are the games they practice, of which one is called *Matrimony*; but others are peculiar to themselves: the following is one, to which they seem to be particularly devoted.

"The players seat themselves around a bison robe spread on the ground, and each individual deposits in the middle the articles he intends to stake, such as vermillion, beads, knives, blankets, &c., without any attention to the circumstance of equalizing its value with the deposits made by his companions.

"Four small sticks are then laid upon the robe, and the cards are shuffled, cut, and two are given to each player, after which the trump is turned. The hands are then played, and whoever gains two tricks takes one of the sticks. If two persons make each a trick, they play together until one loses his trick, when the other takes a stick. The cards are again dealt, and the process is continued until all the sticks are taken. If four persons have each a stick, they continue to play, to the exclusion of the unsuccessful gamesters. When a player wins two sticks, four cards are dealt to him, that he may take his choice of them. If a player wins three sticks, six cards are dealt to him, and should he take the fourth stick he wins the stake."

²⁷ See Stewart Culin, *Games of the North American Indians*, 304-305.

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When they saw us passing at some distance, these onlookers waved to us, pointing out the women with very expressive gestures.

We went bathing, too, as much to escape from the suffocating heat of the prairie, which was almost entirely deprived of shade, as to protect ourselves from the awful vermin which devoured our Indian friends. We swam in their company. The Osage do not swim the way we do; they strike the water with their legs out-stretched; when they do not want to be heard they move without letting their feet out of the water. Their swimming is not so graceful as ours, but there is no doubt that they swim faster and longer than Europeans.

It was mostly when bathing that the *kangas* and even the warriors bothered us with indiscreet questions. Very often they suggested providing us with women for a few coins of small change. If we swam along beside them, they asked us to let them examine our bodies; we had to tell them very sternly to be of more decent behavior.

The condition of constant inferiority in which the Indians keep the women might well be the cause for habits of sodomy, which their curiosity seemed to announce and which they exercise, according to what they say, on their prisoners. These sons of nature are extremely lascivious; young men are constantly prowling about in the woods or around the lodges to find some consenting female. In war time they bring women with them for the benefit of the warriors, when the expedition is not supposed to last too long. Love, according to old traditions as well as those of our modern times, is not found among the Osage; at least I do not know of any love story like the ones which are told about the Blackfeet and the Pawnee.

Marriages are concluded for material interests. A young warrior does not want a woman so much for her beauty as for her family, her interest in her work, and her physical strength. He

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wants a woman capable of doing any sort of work, the only exception being the kind which it is his privilege to attend to. He will take a number of wives according to his fortune or the importance of his lodge, but not necessarily his rank. Chonkêh has five wives, the Head Chief only one. I should mention here that Majakita has no income attached to his title.

The Osage civil code is quite remarkable in the article, "Marriage." Any man may marry as many wives as he can take care of. A couple may divorce by mutual consent, in which case the husband takes back what he has given to his father-in-law. A man gives to the father of the bride-to-be the number of horses, bison-robés, or blankets equal in value to the woman who will work for him; therefore, he pays for her. Any man who marries the eldest of several sisters is by right the husband of the younger ones. He does not have to give anything for these girls. A husband has the right to kill an unfaithful wife, and the seducer must pay the parents the value of the woman.

The first wife is the favored one; the mistress of the lodge, her work consists in distributing the work of the others, who obey without protesting. This little harem can live peacefully together only when the wives of the warriors are related to one another; otherwise there are constant discussions among them. The husband is supposed to share his favors among all his wives and prove to the first one that he prefers her to the others, even if she is old and toothless. Chabé-chinka, the husband of our cook, Ouichinghêh, had a second wife younger and less repulsive; but he fulfilled his duties very religiously by sleeping alternately in our lodge and in that of his second wife.

The marriage ceremony is quite simple. The bridegroom-to-be comes to pay the price of the girl, takes her to his lodge along with her male relations, and gives a feast for them.²⁸

²⁸ Cf. E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 17 ff., for marriage customs among the Omaha.

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The Osage women are no more faithful than their pale-face sisters; the young girls are not particularly virtuous. The husbands are not jealous; however, some avenge themselves for the unfaithfulness of their wives. Pichêh, that partisan who was lamenting in Naniompa, was seriously wounded after a quarrel with a deceived husband.

The problems of inheritance are easily solved: the eldest son keeps his father's horses, the eldest daughter becomes the owner of the lodge. The younger ones have nothing to expect; however, the girls get married easily, since they do not need any dowry. The young men can, thanks to their father's horses, get hold of wild horses with which they soon make a fortune.

Large herds of horses are the real riches of the prairie savages. When the Osage lived in the woods, they did not need any mounts, but they cannot get along without horses on the prairie. The red nations are all well aware of the value of these animals. They are well-kept and well-groomed, and watched with extreme care. The loss of a horse is lamented as much as that of a friend. The more horses that are owned by a savage, the more hunters he can send to the buffalo hunt, the more meat he can have with which to feed the wives who work for him, build his lodge, cook, and tan his hides.

When hunting, as well as when he fights, the Osage cannot do without a horse; the horse carries his lodge, his stakes, his children, his wives, and himself. At the hunt, while the hunter is dismembering a bison he has shot down, his horse is beside him and warns his master by his frightened attitude at the approach of danger. On foot on the prairie, the savage would soon wear out the thin soles of his moccasins; the long grass would soon tear his *mitas*; then his feet would quickly be flayed, ulcers would open on his legs, constantly whipped by hardened stalks. The horse saves the savage from the bites of the rattlesnakes; sometimes he is the victim of the latter, but most of the

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time his instinct warns him in time, and he jumps out of reach of the dangerous reptiles.

The *kangas* bothered us unceasingly with their constant begging for *nanihûh* (tobacco). One can refuse them without offending them, but only under the strict condition of never asking anything from them.

We spent all our mornings on horseback, from the break of day until eleven o'clock; we camped and ate at the lodges of all the chiefs who came in turn to invite us. We were the friends of the greatest warriors of the nation. After the meals we came back to our lodges or played chess to escape the excessive heat of the sun. The savages made a circle around us and tried to understand the game, but without success. At last they declared the game was a *medicine*. Still they recognized some of the pieces: the king, whom they consider a *kahikêh*, or chief; the queen, *kahikêh ouakau*, woman-chief; and the horsemen, *caouas*, horses. I took advantage of the absolute immobility of my savages to make drawings of some of them. Their attention was then brought to my work, and they agreed very willingly to sit for me. The Head Chief asked me to make a portrait of him, a favor which I granted him without needing to be urged. I was then asked many questions on the use I intended to make of these portraits. They told me, "You are going to take them over the Big Water to the country of the French and you will show them what the Osage are like." I let them see the drawings and they were satisfied.²⁹

We finally reached the Arkansas river without seeing any trace of the Little Osage.

²⁹ These sketches were: Frontispiece: *Majakita, Grand-Chef des Osages*; Plate I: *Ouichinghêh, Pleureuse, Jeune fille, Femme du Grand-Chef des Konsas*; Plate II: *Guerriers Osages: Chonkêh, Man-chap-ché-mani, La grosse tête, Kansé-tanga, Ta-ouan-li*; Plate III: *Médecine du charbon*. They are all reproduced in the present volume: see List of Illustrations.

VIII. THE BISON

A RACE BY KANGAS—PRAIRIES WITHOUT WOOD—SCOUTS—*Chemin Croche*—PRECAUTIONS—THE BISON—PRAIRIE DOGS—THE HUNT—ANGER OF THE BISON—TROPHIES—THE HORSE—DANGERS—RETURN TO THE CAMP—AN ACCIDENT—TRACKS OF THE ENEMY—BRAIDS—SHORT-RIBS—SKINS—WOLVES—A TRACK—DISCRETION—THE *Lapâties*—THE KANSA—WHITE FEATHER—PENAL CODE—KANSA GIRLS—MARRIAGE OF THE WHITE PEOPLE—ANNOUNCEMENT OF INDIAN BEAUTIES—PRETENSIONS OF A HALF-BREED—SEPARATION—A RATTLE-SNAKE BITE—THE RATTLESNAKES

WE WERE going to enter the woodless prairies. It was necessary to make certain preparations before going into these deserts, where only deer, bison, and Pawnee are to be found. Stakes were cut for building the lodges; they were also necessary to keep the horses, which were going to be more indispensable than ever. The braves chose long forked staffs, which are used to rope stolen horses. The chiefs had decided that bull boats were not necessary and that we might ford the river. The date assigned for the crossing was the next day.

Deer are abundant in the woods that border the Arkansas River. We killed a great number; however, we hunted with caution, for the Pawnee often send war detachments. They lay ambushes and will kill a lonely hunter with an arrow, if they think they will not be caught.

In camp, young boys, or *kangas*, amused themselves by throwing gun barrels with amazing skill. These were to fall between two pieces of wood stuck in the ground at a very short distance from each other. Some others chose a very small target and threw their knives at it from quite a distance. The one who

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hit the target received a cluster of green branches from his competitors. Almost all of them practised archery. One of the players fixed an arrow into the ground so as to offer a very small visible surface. This arrow was the target which the other players tried to break by shooting more arrows at it. All the archers had to stand at the place from which the first one had shot.

Baptiste suggested a race among the little boys. A *lapânie* fulfilled the functions of town crier and announced the race, carrying at the end of a long staff a scarlet breech cloth, the prize to be given to the winner. All the *kangas* under eighteen were allowed to compete. A warrior on horseback took the children to the place assigned for the start. The distance to be covered was two miles, and the goal was the scarlet *braguet*, which the winner was the first to touch. The contestants had taken off their clothes, which might have hampered them, and at the signal they all ran toward the goal. Their manner of running does not look like ours: at first they trot, to save their strength, then they sprint. Many of the children stopped on the way, and, of fifty runners, only three fought to the end. The winner brought his prize to his mother.

The next day, we forded the Arkansas without too much confusion. Our expedition now assumed a different aspect. A body of braves preceded the long file, and the horses carried, hanging to each side of the saddles, the arches of the lodges and the stakes to which they were to be tied.

The lodges were built near a small river with a sand bottom. There were no trees, and the water was so low that we had to dig holes in the sand to be able to bathe ourselves. We captured a great many catfish with our hands.¹ These we ate in the company of Chonkêh, who was the only one among the Osage willing to taste this food, which we ourselves found excellent.

¹ In the original: *poisson armé*, but the description seems to indicate *catfish*. The common Creole word was *barbue*.

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The catfish resembles the pike; its head and, especially, its jaws are much longer than those of the latter. Its skin is quite tough, and the fins of its back form very sharp points which may hurt you when you seize it. It is very common in all the rivers of the United States.

The prairie on which we were camping was quite barren; not one tree was to be seen; to make a fire we had nothing but dried bramble. We ran out of it soon. The land was covered, in spots, with buffalo bones whitened by the dew and the sun. This camp was a sad sight.

We journeyed for several days, living on dried meat, a few deer we killed from time to time, and a white root, eaten raw, which the traders have named *pomme blanche*. The taste and shape of the latter remind you of horse-radish.² The scarcity of food was beginning to be felt. Some lodges had exhausted their supply of dried meat. A regular trade was established. Criers offered to every lodge red paint, cloth, or harness in exchange for bundles of short-ribs or tressed meat.

Soon even the bramble disappeared, so we had to use dried bison dung to make a fire. When the rain had soaked this fuel, we had to eat dried meat raw—a very meager fare, as you know. We often had to let fresh venison spoil for lack of fire to cook it. A little farther south we found a few small woods.

On our way, we saw every day the bones of recently killed bison, but we never overtook the live animals. We were told constantly that large herds were near, but when we arrived the buffaloes had departed, leaving many a victim on the ground.

² "The *Nu-ga-re*, or ground-apple, called by the French *Pomme blanche*; a root resembling a long turnip, about the size of a hen's egg, with a rough thick skin, and hard pith. It is sometimes eaten raw, and has a sweet taste, but is rather dry; or it is dried in the sun, and pulverized; in this state it furnishes the chief ingredient of an excellent soup." [Among the Pawnee] "we saw . . . the *pomme blanche*, as called by the Canadian traders and boatmen, which is the root of the *Psoralea esculenta*. It is eaten either boiled or roasted, and somewhat resembles the sweet potatoe."—E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 294-95; II, 217.

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The Little Osage were ahead of us. After much hastening, we finally camped one night within sight of their lodges, but left the next morning without speaking to them. They were going north and we continued westward. We prepared ourselves seriously for the hunt.

The council assembled and sent scouts after the buffalo. They came back two days later with good news. It was known in camp as soon as they were seen, that the scouts had succeeded in their search, for they came following a crooked way,³ that is to say, they ran from side to side instead of coming straight toward the camp. They informed their brothers in this way that they had seen a great many bison. They told the council that several herds were grazing not far from the camp on plains where hunting was easy.

The heralds spread the news and gave the order not to shoot even once with a gun under penalty of being flogged, and not to make any noise that might be heard by the animals. This interdiction rather annoyed us, for we could see on the sand of the pretty river, which was the water supply of the camp, very fine avocets (*Recurvirostra americana*), but we understood the importance of the order and hoped to find the same kind of birds later. The "soldiers" then entered upon their duties. Assigned to take care of the police work of the camp, they were provided with huge, long whips quite capable of inspiring ideas of submission in the most refractory person.⁴ I submitted willingly to the wise orders of the Partisan, although I was told that he would easily forgive a guest of the nation for shooting a gun. I refrained from shooting: living with the Osage, I wanted to live like them. On the prairies I wanted to be an Osage.

The singing and the cries of the evening ceased; one could

³ Tixier wrote: *Ils firent le chemin croche.* Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 280.

⁴ Cf. E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 297; Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 215.

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not even hear any snoring. The Indians, used to the continuous possibility of an ambush, constantly feel that they have to conceal their presence. Since snoring might reveal it, they never snore. During all the time I spent on the prairies I never heard the breathing of a savage louder during his sleep than while he was awake. Is it not conceivable that the will might exercise its influence while all the other faculties are practically non-existent?

We moved off early with remarkable order. The Partisan walked ahead of the village, preceding a line of soldiers. The busybodies who tried to break through in order to see better or for any other reason were whipped in such a way that the marks would probably remain for a long time. A few men selected by Chonkēh rode on horseback along the ridges of the neighboring hills scouting the country. When they stopped, so did the village. These scouts proceeded cautiously, and never showed themselves before finding out whether they might be seen by the bison.⁵

We were climbing a sandy hill in the middle of which were hundreds of small, cone-shaped mounds. It was a village of prairie dogs. A sentinel signalled our arrival with a little cry and ran into its burrough. A few owls which flew up temporarily also hid underground. We stopped for a while: the scouts had stopped, and we could see on the horizon three small black specks which seemed to move slowly. The Partisan with whom I rode said to me, beaming with joy: "*Diēh ouanombrēh tsēht-houka*" ("you are going to eat bison meat"); and I answered: "*Viēh irarēh läbeni tsēht-houka*" ("I see three bison").

These three bison were alone and we approached them easily. The order was given not to disturb them. The Osage were afraid that if they hunted them they would have to run

⁵ For accounts of the buffalo hunt among the Omaha, consult E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 295-302, and Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 275 ff.

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after them as far as the herds, which would run away. We let them escape. They galloped in front of us. These beasts, well known nowadays, are massive looking and do not seem to be shaped for running, and yet I was surprised by their speed. It takes a good horse to overcome the bulls and an excellent runner to reach the cows, which, though lighter than the males, are also more rapid than the *cayacs*.⁶

The hunting horses were brought, which the warriors rode bareback. Pack-horses were made ready to carry the meat. The villages were given the order to go and camp near a river within sight, and the hunters were arranged in line behind the soldiers, with the Partisan in the lead.

We soon arrived within a short distance of a herd of about twenty buffaloes; they walked as far as half a mile from the main herd. Then the *cayacs* saw the hunters; they raised their heads and soon ran away toward the creek, on the other side of which a large plain stretched away. Chonkêh uttered the war cry and the hunters broke away at a gallop. The best beast belongs to the best horse, and for this reason they say on the prairie: "My horse has killed many bison."

I remained on a hill watching this scene so new to me. These huge beasts, running together, crossed the creek and scattered on the plain. The Osage were chasing them furiously; soon they gained ground and rode among the herd. Clouds of dust arose. At a distance one could see the black bison pressed close by the horses at full gallop. A few bulls fell; the rest scattered behind the hills, still followed closely by the tireless horses.

In a bison hunt, each hunter chooses the beast he wants to run down. Consequently, the first to come have their choice. No one else may follow the beast another is running until he gives it up. The race is a merciless one; the bowmen and the

⁶ A Creole word: male bison.—TIXIER.

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men armed with rifles run at the right of the beast; those who are armed with pistols or spears choose the left.

But it is often only after a long race that the hunter is close enough to his victim to kill it. The pursued animal, seeing that he is beginning to lose ground by following the plain, where the running is easy, looks for spots the access to which is dangerous; rivers, ravines, bogs—he goes through anything. The Indian never hesitates: if his horse stops, frightened by the leap that he has to make, he whips it, urges it on until it jumps. Once the bison is reached, the animal tries to escape in another direction, he doubles to deceive his enemy; then seeing himself overtaken, he becomes enraged and turns against his aggressor. A sure sign of the bison's anger is the sudden rising of his tail, which he keeps stiffly bent. The horse, accustomed to the hunt, jumps; for, seeing this, he knows that the bull is going to charge. The hunter flees from the animal he was pursuing, but this does not mean he is giving up capturing it. On other occasions and during the rutting season, the *cayac* is dangerous—he stops short, and the horse, in full gallop, is gored. The *cayac* tramples the hunter and his mount; however, well-trained horses escape in time by galloping over an oblique route. But the hour of death has come; a bullet lodged between its ribs or in the neck fells the victim; an arrow shot by a skillful hand penetrates the bull's chest obliquely behind the last rib, sinks completely into its body and often pierces the skin on the other side. If the arrow has not completely disappeared into its chest, the savage drives it in with his foot. Rarely is a second arrow necessary. An arrow kills more efficiently than a bullet. Chabé-Chinka, our hunter, did not remember having shot two at the same bison.

Fatally wounded, the beast vomits torrents of blood and falls to its knees before sinking to the ground. The hunter awaits its death and dismounts; he overturns his quarry and ties his horse

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to one of its horns. He first cuts off the tail and the tongue, which belong by right to the one who has killed the beast. The tail is the trophy of the conqueror. The skin is split under the belly by a long cut; the hunter drinks the milk, if the beast is a cow, then cuts off the udders and skin. The Osage then choose their meat. At first, casting aside the shoulders and the legs, they lift in one piece the flat muscles of the chest and the stomach,⁷ break the ribs, and put the loins aside. If the hunter is followed by another horse, he loads it with all this meat and runs after another bison, for a good horse can overtake three or four cows in one hunt. If not, he puts a whole slice of short-ribs on the back of his mount; then one part of the chest, ribs included, he uses as a saddle; he places on top the other side, then he ties the loins and the small intestines in bundles with straps of skin before and behind his improvised saddle, and covers the whole thing with skin.

While the hunter is cutting his ox, his horse watches over him and warns him in case of danger; he pricks up his ears, he stirs, then the hunter, giving up the hunt, gallops away. It is agreed between the Osage that, in case of alarm, the hunters in danger wave their blankets while fleeing. This precaution was taken as a result of a dreadful event. Seven or eight years ago, fifty Osage were killed and scalped by the Patoka, during a single hunt.

When a pack animal follows a hunter, the hunting horse returns to camp without any other burden but its rider. The savage goes back to his lodge after the hunt by following his own tracks; he was not able, because of the rapidity of his course, to notice exactly the route he followed; therefore, when the hunt lasts until late at night, darkness hindering him from following

⁷ In the original: *plats-côtes*. "They are called 'short-ribs.' It is the most desirable cut with which to prepare dried meat."—TIXIER. [For the butchering of the animal, see Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*. 271 ff.]

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his tracks, the Osage spends the night at the very place where he killed his ox, if the precise location of the camp is not well known to him.

Besides the dangers which I mentioned, falling from one's horse during a hunt is dreadful; a horseman, well in the middle of a hunt, is in great danger of being trampled to death by the heavy quadrupeds. It also happens frequently that a stray bullet hits a poor hunter.

In the rutting season, the *cayac*, which is not hunted any more because of the very pronounced musky taste of its flesh, defends the female he is following and boldly attacks the hunter. That happens only in the month of July, for it is only then that herds of cows and *cayacs* are mixed. The rest of the time, cows and calves live in herds separated from the males. During the great hunts, it also happens that wounded buffaloes, whether pursued or astray, sometimes cause accidents in the lodges or nearby; but they are soon killed.

A well-aimed arrow or bullet is generally sufficient to kill a buffalo; but I have seen an unfortunate bull pursued by *kangas*, its body bristling with arrows. Another, whose tail I was granted the honor of cutting, had already been struck by more than twenty bullets when I felled it.

The hunting of the northern tribes differs from that of the Osage; the former literally surround the animals and force them to run pressed against one another between two lines of hunters, who never ride into the midst of the herd like our Ouachachêhs.

Out of the twenty *cayacs*, for at this time the herds were not composed of cows and bulls, nineteen were killed during this first hunt. Spits were put up everywhere; the short-ribs, the cuds, ribs, loins, the humps were being roasted over all the fires; the boiled cuts and the sausage were simmering. We soon had several banquets to attend, and we were served the hump so

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often praised. This cut would deserve its reputation if it were less greasy. I much preferred ribs, and especially delicious sausage. The sausage of the prairies is not made with blood; the small intestine of the bison is washed and turned inside out so that the fat is inside, then meat cut in thin strips is inserted; water is added, and, when both ends are tied, it is broiled on charcoal. It is a very fine Osage dish. An Osage can easily eat an ell, in addition to his share of broiled and roasted meat.

At every fire they told of the prowess of the hunting horses of the lodge. Several who had received a piece of meat from a neighbor more fortunate or more skillful were boasting about their own horses.

Chabé-Chinka brought back two tails and tongues with a load of meat and did not talk about his horse. James killed a buffalo with his pistols on his first hunt; the *cayac's* tail proved that he was telling the truth.

Man-chap-ché-mani came to pay us a visit; he had seen some fresh tracks on the river bank which were not those of the Osage; moreover, a man had been seen hiding in the tall grass. The heralds confirmed this news, and our friend left us to set out in quest of a scalp. The night was quiet: next day none of the horses was missing. It was decided to remain on the same location until the following day, to prepare the meat of the beasts which had been killed.

In a hunt, the meat belongs entirely to the man who has brought down the animal, but when an Osage has killed two bison he generally gives half of the second one to a less lucky hunter. When he is back in camp, he makes presents of meat; besides, he always sends a piece of beef to every one of the war lodges. Of all venisons, buffalo is the one the savages like best; they prize cows more than oxen, especially the fat ones. They seldom kill the calves.

Fat is used instead of butter. It is the sauce regularly used

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with dried beef. It is also used to cook *sagamité* and to fry fritters. They collect it carefully and blend it with water in kettles. They keep it in doe-skins sown together and which are called *Faons*.⁸ The meat is prepared as follows. The short-ribs are flattened and sown with pieces of bark until they form a wide expanse of meat. The flesh of the other cuts is cut in long strips which are hung over a stick supported by two stakes. This meat dries in the sun to a certain extent; the strips are then intertwined, from thirty to forty at a time; next they are placed on the hurdles between the sun and fires, folded several times together with the short-ribs, and, when they are quite dry, put into a skin. The women often open these bundles, lay the meat in the sun, and soak it with fat to prevent it from drying. They succeed in this manner in making it as tough as tarred rope; it can be kept for two or three years without spoiling.

During the winter they tan the hides, which are covered with long hair and of which good robes can be made. The skin always belongs to the one who has killed the animal. In the summer they seldom keep a whole skin; it is too loose in texture and the hair falls easily. However, when they need it to cover a lodge, they stretch it between stakes and raze off the hair with a piece of steel.

While our meat is drying, let us speak about *Tséht-houka*.⁹ The bison, formerly scattered, as it is well known, over almost all of the United States, was still seen a few years ago near the mouths of the Missouri; but today it is found beyond the Osage villages, one hundred and twenty miles above the Arkansas River. These animals live in large herds, which decrease in number every year. The savages wage a merciless war on them; it can be said that they waste a great many. For instance, the

⁸ That is, doe- or fawn-skins.

⁹ Cf. E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 242 ff., and Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 210-21.

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Osage leave from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds of excellent meat on every carcass. In winter, there are periods of abundance during which they kill buffaloes just for their tongues and their skins.

It is impossible to make these improvident people understand that to kill buffaloes in such manner is to hasten their complete disappearance. These useful animals, the hunting of which is a need and a pleasure for the redskins, will disappear some day, and that day the redskins will begin to be civilized, for there will be no existence possible for them unless they engage in agriculture and industry. But, knowing their tastes, as long as the buffaloes live in herds numerous enough to be hunted and lived upon, the savages will keep most of their primitive ways of living.

The bison has two main yearly migrations, which follow the seasons and the green grass. In the spring, it goes from Texas to Canada and returns when winter is near; thus it goes through the hunting grounds of the Osage twice a year. A nomadic nation, the Comanche or Patoka, a little-known tribe, follows the migration of the buffalo; this wandering life is one of the causes which prevents the whites from establishing relations with them.

The bison live in herds which sometimes reach several thousand in number. There are several varieties of color. Mr. Papin assured me that he had seen three white buffaloes; some are spotted with white.¹⁰ The Indians think that among the wild beasts there are hermaphrodites, which are called *bredaches* by the Creoles. They can run very fast and their meat is prized highly. Every skillful hunter claims he has killed one or two.

During the whole night, we heard on the prairie the howl-

¹⁰ For the white buffalo and his importance in Indian ritual, consult Truman Michelson, *Fortieth Annual Report*, Bureau of American Ethnology, 23-289; Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe* (consult index); E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 244.

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ing of wolves, which were attracted by the remnants left by the Osage. Our warriors watched more carefully than ever, for the Pawnee often imitate these lugubrious cries with such perfection that even the savages are deceived by it. This signal serves to let their companions know the location they have chosen for a surprise attack on the camp.

The following day, while we proceeded with our journey, the Osage discovered the tracks of a shod horse. The warriors galloped along this track, which we could not even perceive, but they soon gave up following it, for it followed a straight line in a direction which could not possibly cause any anxiety.

Shortly after, one of the horsemen who rode along the neighboring hills came at the full speed of his mount and said a few words to the Partisan, who uttered the war-cry and, followed by two hundred warriors, rushed toward a certain spot pointed out to him. The horse which Mr. Papin was riding, carried away by the general pursuit, went after the others, and our excellent host was unwillingly involved in the war expedition. The Osage divided into several troops to surround a small hill and soon disappeared behind the hills. We stopped without dismounting. The women began their song of tears, repeating "Pawnee" many times.

The warrior who gave the alarm had found the fresh tracks of a horse; he had followed them to a small hill, where the horseman had obviously set foot on the ground. On that spot very clear tracks and torn grass did not allow any doubt concerning the fact that a man had been there recently to fulfill an important physiological function. Then the man had got on his horse and left at a gallop. The Osage resumed their investigations, which remained fruitless. Joining the main troop, they went on their way. Only then did one Osage declare that he was the one who had left this track. He gave a precise description of it, which dispelled any possible doubt.

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One should not be surprised by such manner of acting. It is a custom of the Osage not to speak inopportunely. If the warrior had declared in the first place that he had been there, the tracks would not have been verified, and he was not sure that a Pawnee had not been at the same place the same day. It was more prudent, therefore, at the risk of causing anxiety in the village, to let the investigation be carried on. The Osage acted wisely.

A short time later, the traces of a recent hunt were found. The warriors drove their horses near the dead buffaloes to accustom them to the smell and the appearance of the latter. The Osage wondered who had been hunting there. The Little Osage were much farther north. Scouts were sent to reconnoiter. They came back soon and told us that a hundred lodges of the Kansa nation were encamping at a distance of two days' journey. During the hunt, two days mean about forty miles. Our warriors had been entertained by the Kansa, who were living in plenty and advised us to come and share their good fortune.¹¹

The scouts had hardly set foot on the ground before a *lapânic* arrived accompanied by two Kansa *kangas*, whose saddles were laden with fresh meat. This *lapânie* was a perfect type of his kind. Boldness, insolence, cleverness, vanity, and baseness were all together in this *pasquin* of the redskins. Our Kansa had just arrived when he noticed a lodge in front of which some excellent horses were tied; he cleverly found out the name of their owner and cried out several times about the camp that Ishta-ska was the greatest Osage warrior. Such proclamation is paid for dearly, and the *lapânie* was well aware of the fact; he received as his reward a very fine horse. The pride of a savage inclines him to encourage the one who flatters him. Proclaimed the bravest, the wealthiest, the most generous in the nation, he pays

¹¹ For the Kansa Indians, consult Hodge, *Handbook*, I, 653-55; Catlin, *Letters*, II, 23-24; E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 186-99, 206-210.

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as a rich, generous man. In Europe, in the prairie, everywhere man is the victim of his conceit.

The *lapânie* constantly makes faces and contortions, he never has the calm, dignified attitude which characterizes the soldier. If you remember Big Soldier, who went to Paris, you have a correct idea of what the Indian marmitons look like.

The Kansa renewed the invitation which our scouts had extended to us already. The next day he came back to our camp and acted so cleverly that every one of the Osage lodges made him presents. The second day we arrived at the camp of our friends.

The lodges of the Osage were built at some distance from those of the Kansa. The savages are suspicious and fear treason; so the camps of two nations which meet on the prairie always remain separated. A quarrel between two young men might bring a general conflict, and in case of trouble the lodges of each party would constitute separate rallying places.

Our lodges were hardly covered when a messenger came in the name of the Head Chief of the Kansa to invite all the Osage warriors and the palefaces to a great banquet. The Osage did not wash before going to the feast but, without wasting any time, gathered together outside the enclosure of the lodges. Majakita talked with his braves and walked abreast of them. As for us white people, we walked ahead of the column and entered the camp of our hosts preceded by the herald and the messenger I have mentioned already. The Osage did not seem to pay any attention to the inhabitants of the villages. They do not want to show a curiosity unworthy of a man: as a matter of fact, they are better and quicker observers than we. Yielding to my nature and unashamed to look with interest at those new things for which I traveled so far, I noticed how different the Kansa lodges were from ours. Each frame was covered with skins decorated with red, yellow, blue, and black designs which,

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through their primitive simplicity, recall the ancient Egyptian paintings. These lodges, the lower parts of which were very much like ours, were covered with semicylindrical roofs, raised in the middle in the shape of a tent. Several warriors had real tents made of painted skins.¹²

The Kansa girls, much prettier than the Osage ones, looked at us without showing any shyness; their glances were even encouraging. We arrived at the lodge of the Head Chief, a large and spacious one, although too small to hold all the Osage warriors. White Feather¹³ asked in Majakita, Baptiste, some of the principal chiefs, and us, the white warriors. We smoked first in silence, then we ate broiled beef *ad libitum*. The meal ended with a dish of dried pumpkin mixed with beans and a cup of *manka-sabéh* prepared with roasted acorns and sweetened with maple syrup.

White Feather, the chief of the Kansa, was a short, wiry man with an aquiline nose and piercing eyes. His costume was like that of the Osage. Like Majakita, he had nothing to distinguish him from the other warriors. He wore, like Baptiste, a colored shirt on which hung a necklace of porcelain beads. He had two wives, one of whom had an air of distinction very seldom found among the Kansa women. I obtained the permission to draw a portrait of her. When I came back to France on the *Iowa*, I learned through Mr. Davidson, a dragoon officer in Fort Leavenworth, that the young woman died shortly after her return to the village.

The Head Chief invited us a second time to this lodge and told us that the first feast had been given in honor of the Osage

¹² Catlin spoke of these painted skins among the Crow, Pawnee, and Mandan Indians (*Letters*, II, 246-48). See his plates 306-312.

¹³ Twenty years earlier the members of Long's expedition noted that "Wom-pa-ra, he who scares all men, more commonly known to the whites as Plume Blanche, or White Plume [is] a man rising rapidly in importance, and apparently destined to become the leader of the nation" (I, 177). John T. Irving, in 1833, declared that he was then nearly seventy (*Indian Sketches*, 40-41), but this seems to be an error. Cat-

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Nation but that he wanted this time to entertain us personally. He also told us that he had seen, a few moons before, some white warriors who were going toward the Rocky Mountains in wagons.

That day we were invited to repeated feasts, which did not disturb our digestive functions, although they were plentiful and in great number.

When we came back to our lodge, we had frequent encounters with the Kansa dogs. If their threatening attitude had forced us to kill them, their masters would have made us indemnify them for their presumed value. Among the savages, one always has to indemnify people for the losses for which one is responsible. If you kill a dog which does not have the rabies, whatever it may have done to you, you have to pay for it. For homicides committed willfully or not, the law of retaliation is enforced: a murder for a murder; blood for blood; however, one is entitled to suggest redeeming the murderer. One Osage killed an inhabitant of a neighboring village during a quarrel. He offered his fortune, that is to say, his lodge, his horses, to redeem his life. The offer was refused. The family of the dead man wanted blood. The murderer had his friends accompany him to the place where he was to undergo sentence. When he fell, killed by a bullet, his relatives threw a blanket over him to conceal his agony, took the body away, and gave him a handsome funeral. No voice arose in favor of the culprit, no arm was raised to save him from the punishment he had deserved.

While cleaning his rifle, another Osage killed a warrior who was at some distance by accident. The relatives had the murderer give them his lodge and his horses. Now the murderer is living in any lodge where he may obtain shelter.

lin, who saw White Plume about this same time, described him as "a very urbane and hospitable man, of good portly size, speaking some English, and making himself good company for all white persons who travel through his country and have the good luck to shake his liberal and hospitable hand." (*Letters*, II, 23.)

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The beauty of the Kansa girls made Baptiste worry a great deal; he had a daughter who was, in his opinion, one of the prettiest women who had ever lived on the prairie. He gave her rich ornaments and made her ride his most beautiful horse, harnessed with all the luxury the savages are so fond of. He even had his daughter's name proclaimed several times. When one wants to bring a brave or a girl to the attention of the public, he gives horses, arms, or red blankets to young warriors, who run about the village crying out the name of the one who has been so generous. One can obtain popularity in this manner. When there is competition, the most generous is the one to be proclaimed. Baptiste, vain half-breed that he was, had given ten horses to have the name of his daughter, the Prairie Rose, cried out.¹⁴

Baptiste made it clear to us on several occasions that he did not want her to marry a savage; it is true that he refused her hand to an Osage who offered fifty horses for her. This worthy father doubtless hoped that he might make us decide to imitate the example of young Europeans who, while traveling in this country, forgot their countries and their families to become savages and to live with the young beauties whom they loved. He let us understand that our asking would be favorably received. However, the beauty of Mlle. Baptiste was thrown into the shade by that of the Kansa girls; so the father was very critical about the latter and always mentioned, by comparison, the wealth, the large lodge, and the intelligence of his daughter. The poor man was going through useless trouble, for none of us

¹⁴ Many wild roses are found beyond the Arkansas. They are small eglantine bushes with low stalks which creep along the ground. The flower is dark pink.—TIXIER.

"Every where the rose is met with, and reminds us of cultivated gardens and civilization. It is scattered over the prairies in small bouquets, and, when glittering in the dews and waving in the pleasant breeze of early morning, is the most beautiful of the prairie flowers."—Frémont, *Report of Exploring Expedition*, 14.

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was tempted to marry in the manner of the savages, although it is a bond which one can break easily.

Besides the morals of the girls were not very strict. The Kansa girls came to bathe near us; they splashed us; threw sand at us:

. . . *Lasciva puella,*
Et fugit ad salices, et se cupid ante videri.

A few days before our arrival, the Pawnee had taken sixty horses away from the Kansa. A close watch was kept during the night. The young men went some distance from the camp to lie in ambush, but it was too late, because the prudent Pawnee had gone away as soon as they had made their coup, for fear of being detected and pursued.

One Kansa hunter had been killed during the hunt. The murder was at first attributed to the Pawnee, but as his scalp had been respected, and his feet and hands had not been cut off, it was thought he had been the victim of an accident. The family, for lack of clues, gave up the prosecution and, of course, the culprit did not give himself up.

The theft of their horses had revived the bellicose disposition of the Kansa. They had already put on charcoal;¹⁵ but on finding that our braves were going to begin their war dances, several decided to follow the Osage to form a more numerous detachment.

For six nights the two nations traveled and hunted together. After this time, passed in common pleasures and activities, White Feather and Wolf left, and we went on our way, accompanied by only ten Kansa lodges.

At our next encampment, a young woman happened to step on a rattlesnake of the smallest species (*crotalus miliaris*),

¹⁵ See n. 4, p. 212, *infra*. It is not clear whether these Kansa have put on their black war paint. Early in the next chapter, Tixier describes the ceremony of "putting on the charcoal."

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which bit her heel. I was sent for, although the Osage did not expect her to recover.

The accident had happened ten minutes before at some distance from the camp. When the savages had brought back the wounded woman, she was surrounded by a circle of women who had already begun a lugubrious, monotonous song broken with sobs. I had great difficulty in opening a way for myself to my patient, and when I reached her I was surprised by the violence of the general symptoms she showed. This girl, about twenty years old, was lying on the ground in a condition of extreme anguish. Her face was contracted and of the color of the earth, dripping with abundant, cold perspiration; the skin of the rest of the body was dry and cold, her pulse feeble and quick; a general convulsive trembling alternated with a complete prostration during which one noticed frequent contractions of the flexor tendons of the fingers. I removed her *mitas* of blue cloth and her moccasins of deer-skin, leaving a strip tightly tied around her leg below the knee.

Her leg was quite swollen, pale red in color, and spotted with purple. She felt acute pains there, especially inside. Her foot was red, already edematous. Below the top of the internal ankle-bone, in the middle of the place which separates it from the tendon of Achilles, were two small wounds of a rounded shape about one *ligne* wide, eight *lignes* apart, and placed vertically one under the other. These wounds looked like mere pricks; there was no blood or any red mark around.

With tweezers, I caught hold of a fold of the skin which comprised both wounds and I cut it off with a knife; I removed then the cellular tissue. The Achilles tendon was bared for a length of two or three *lignes* on its inside part. The wound was bleeding profusely, a fact which I attributed to the stagnation of the blood produced by the ligature above the calf. No blood issued from the small arteries. I poured some gunpowder into the

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wound while the women heated a piece of iron until it was red hot. I removed the powder and cauterized the wound deeply and carefully in order to destroy whatever remained of the venom. Then I dressed the wound with dry lint covered with gunpowder. I released somewhat the constriction of the lash and the patient was carried to her lodge, where she lay on bison-skins, her leg kept raised, covered only with some linen constantly soaked in cold water.

It was only at that moment that the cries and the tears of the savages, the only cure known for snake bites, were brought to an end. The patient was very weak, her pulse very weak and slow. She was nauseated and moved her arms convulsively.

Toward six in the evening, the patient vomited again. Strong nausea made the poor woman very tired, and the redskins said that this vomiting was the sign of near death. A teaspoonful of camphorated alcohol stopped the nausea for good. At nine o'clock a second spoonful was administered. The pains in her leg were very acute; she suffered headaches, a very dry tongue, a violent thirst which an enormous amount of water had not been able to quench.

Ten o'clock, somnolency, dreaming, agitation caused by the wailers, who could not be made to go away.

The following day, her foot and leg were quite tumefied, hard and painful; her tongue was red and dry; her pulse, weak, rapid; the patient asked for water constantly. She was calm but downhearted. The convulsive motions had disappeared.

The purple redness of the skin, marbled with bluish spots, its extreme tightness, and some spots protruding from its surface concurred with the general symptoms and made me fear a diffused phlegmon in her leg. I made three incisions, one in the anterior part of the shin, the second in the inside lower part of the leg, the third in the external side of the solear muscle. This released the tightness of the skin immediately. The constriction

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exercised below the calf was relieved. I ordered the women to continue to pour water on the leg.

The wound from the operation of the preceding day looked like a deep burn. A black gap was seen in the bottom of it; the sides were red and hard. I dressed it with lint soaked with bison fat and ordered a substantial diet, soup and roasted meat.

The Osage had waited before resuming their journey in order that the condition of this woman might allow her to be carried. They folded the lodges three days after the accident, and the young men carried the patient to the next camp. The journey tired her somewhat. Her leg did not cause much pain. I found a few fragments of grey cell tissue in the wound, the edges of which were red.

During the evening, an Osage doctor made some skin-deep scarifications on the back part of the foot in spite of my beneficial effect. The wounds were then closed in an appropriate manner and twenty-two days later they were all cured.

For the following reasons the woman did not die from being bitten: (1) the snake was of the smallest species (*crotalus miliaris*). (2) She had been wounded during the month of June, at which time the venom of the rattlesnake is beginning to be less abundant and effective than when the reptile comes out of its torpor. (3) The fangs had to go through a double layer of deerskin and thick cloth which did not allow them to penetrate very deeply. (4) The absorption of the venom was stopped ten minutes after the accident.

The Osage doctors or sorcerers at first had not approved of the method I used; they were frightened by my boldness. But when they saw the results I had obtained, they promised themselves to follow my example and to grant less importance to tears, which they consider so important against rattlesnake bites.¹⁶

¹⁶ *Gazette des hopitaux*, April 6, 1841.—TIXIER.

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This cure brought me the title of *Ouakantaku-chinka*, "Little Medicine Man."

Such accidents are not unusual, but if one considers the enormous number of rattlesnakes which live on these prairies, one is surprised not to find them more frequently. At each step while traveling, we found snakes in front of us. We dismounted and killed them easily by breaking their backbones with sticks. The savages are quite intrigued by the rattles, with which they make an ornament to add to the eagle feathers they place on their scalp locks.

There are two kinds of prairie rattlesnakes. One is the *crotalus durissus*, which is quite different from the Louisiana rattle; its length varies between three and five feet. The second species is the *crotalus miliaris*, distinguished by its red stomach from that of the Terre aux Boeufs; its size is eighteen inches. It is more dangerous than the former because of its small size and the feeble noise of its rattle.

A few people think that the rattlesnake is on good terms with prairie dogs and owls. This fact is too poetic to be true. The rattlesnakes feed on both of these animals, which have too good an instinct to live with this frightful enemy. The owls and snakes live isolated from each other in holes given up by prairie dogs, who, moreover, would willingly give up their places if the snakes came to ask for hospitality.¹⁷

We arrived toward the end of June on the warpaths, four hundred miles beyond the Arkansas. We were not to go farther west; our direction was now the southeast, to go to the Great Saline.¹⁸

¹⁷ Washington Irving referred to a story of a "prairie dog, owl, and rattlesnake who kept house together" (*Journals*, III, 130). See also Latrobe, *Rambler*, I, 236-38; and Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 34-36, 228-30. On the burrowing owl, see E. James, *Long's Expedition*, III, 223.

¹⁸ An exaggeration. Four hundred miles west of a crossing at Wichita would bring them into the Rocky Mountains.

IX. WAR CAMP

FIREFLIES—NIGHT WATCH—CHARCOAL DANCES—ATTIRE—THE CROW—*Bâton Croche*—BROTHER-IN-ARMS—MEDICINE KETTLE—WAR MATS AND WAR BIRDS—DEPARTURE OF THE BRAVES—A MAN COMME IL FAUT—DEFENSE OF THE CAMP—LAST CEREMONIES—NIGHT—SUPERSTITION—ABOUT THE PAWNEE—RETURN—THE PAWNEE—MAHA—THE SALINES—WAR—STRATEGY—VICTORY AND SCALPS—*Coups*—DEFEAT—RETURN TO THE VILLAGE—RELIGION—OUA-KONDAH, THE MASTER OF LIFE—MANITOUS—OSAGE PARADISE—GHOSTS, DREAMS—WORSHIP—HUMAN SACRIFICES—WAR PRISONERS—PRIESTS—MISSIONARIES.

THE council had decided that we would stay encamped on the warpath as long as the warriors were away. A convenient location was chosen, and the lodges were built on a slope which descended towards a pretty stream running through a small wood, where we found many springs and mulberry trees laden with fruit. The women laid tall reeds beneath skins, giving up beds less hard than usual.

Large herds of bison were grazing around this camp, promising us abundance. As soon as our lodges were built, we left for the hunt. While we were hunting, there was such a violent storm that one of our horses was killed by lightning twenty paces from the camp.

In the prairie we had to break up the hunt; the thunder was bursting with horrible violence; terrifying flashes of lightning followed upon one another almost without interval; a downpour, accompanied by thick hail, forced us to seek shelter. Following the example of some savages who had hidden themselves beneath their horses, I removed my saddle and used it as an impenetrable helmet. We had great difficulty in controlling

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our frightened horses. When the storm was over, we continued the hunt, and it was abundant enough to enable us to feast amply at the lodges.

A few of the Osage saw Pawnee walking, and that evening the news was spread by the herald; we were advised to be very watchful, because of the danger of losing our horses or our scalps. It was decided that my three companions and I should take turns guarding our lodge all night. As soon as it was completely dark I began my watch. Hiding behind the lodge, outside the camp, I saw the fires going out; on the prairie a few stray horses were running about; they came to sniff the horse that had been killed by lightning that morning and then returned to their grazing. At the edge of the wood I saw minute flashes, sometimes in the air, sometimes on the ground; I would have mistaken these lights for ghosts or will-o-the-wisps, if I had not often seen similar effects in Louisiana, the cause of which I knew: they were a kind of *coleoptera* called fireflies, which shine at night. At about midnight, I was relieved by someone else, and soon went sound asleep; but it was not for long, for I had hardly closed my eyes when I was awakened by the ominous howling of all the dogs in the village. This infernal music lasted a whole quarter of an hour and then subsided. The Osage claimed that the howling was a sure sign of the presence of the Pawnee, but this did not keep them from going back to sleep immediately.

The war dances were to begin the next day. The morning was spent hunting. Several unusual species of birds were seen in the neighborhood: northern buzzards, yellow-headed starlings, Arkansas fly-catchers, a crowd of sparrows and warblers. The prairie was covered with absinthe,¹ with yellow-flowered le-

¹ "The *artemisia*, absinthe, or prairie sage, as it is variously called, is increasing in size, and glitters like silver, as the southern breeze turns its leaves to the sun."—Frémont, *Report of Exploring Expedition*, 14; also 56, 57, 71, 127, 147.

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guminous plants, the leaves of which, like those of the sensitive plant, have the faculty of contracting when touched; they also close at night and when they are uprooted. Large white poppies with thorny leaves and fine red convolvulus were seen here and there, near a cucurbitaceous plant whose blossoms were not open.

I returned to the camp; I could hear angry words in the distance; I was told that the warriors were "striking the post." I came near and saw that a red post had been set in the ground. The braves came forward one after the other and struck it with their tomahawks; then, extending their hands towards it, they listed their acts of courage and the reasons for their hatred of the Pawnee. This custom brings to mind that of the knights of old, who touched the shield of an opponent with their spear.²

The war chief made the rounds of the lodges, exciting the young men to anger and courage by recalling the glory of their fathers and accusing them of cowardice if they refused to en-roll. Two flags, one American, the other Spanish, were put up before the lodges of the braves and the old men. Chonkêh lost his authority and became a simple warrior. Pichêh, the bravest of the chiefs, took his place. He had the power to levy on all of the lodges a tax of fresh and dried meat, fat, corn, etc. to feed his braves. He sent whatever remained to families which were without food.

At one of the war fires a great heap of charcoal was pulverized and mixed with fat, and the *chaudière de guerre*³ was put on the fire.

When the braves want to take part in an expedition, they

² The same custom was noted among the Oto by the members of Long's Expedition (I, 231): "In the intervals of the dances, a warrior would step forward and strike a flagstaff they had erected with a stick, whip, or other weapon, and recount his martial deeds. This ceremony is called *striking the post*, and whatever is then said may be relied upon as rigid truth, being delivered in the presence of many a jealous warrior and witness, who could easily detect and would immediately disgrace the *striker* for exaggeration or falsehood."

³ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 405 ff.

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should first "strike the post," then circle the camp on horseback and come to a stop before the chief they want for their leader. Speeches are made. The chief accepts or rejects a candidate for the war party according to the proofs he is able to give of his courage, or of the desire to become a brave which he shows before the chief. If he is accepted, he enters the war lodge, dresses in his most handsome equipment, eats the food of the other braves and paints himself black from head to foot with the charcoal that has been prepared; this is called "putting on the charcoal." As soon as enough braves are assembled, they begin to dance around the camp.

Two groups, on leaving the two war lodges, turned in opposite directions and, whenever they met, stopped to face each other. The warriors made maniacal contortions, jumping and capering like madmen. These people, so serious and so composed the day before, looked as if they were possessed of the devil. They were making such faces that they seemed to be on the point of dislocating their jaws, rolling their eyes wildly and twisting their limbs about, mumbling indistinct words, and uttering the war-cry in a low voice, beating drums or blowing *tsu-tséhs* (reed flutes); some took up a warlike song, which they accompanied by striking their fans on some pieces of wood. After this intermission, they completed the turn of the camp and came back to their lodges. The dancers, out of breath and covered with perspiration, began to eat. Such was the first part of the *danse du charbon*.⁴

The costumes of the dancers were very picturesque. Some wore deer tails placed on their heads like the crests of ancient helmets; others had their foreheads crowned with a band made of crows' beaks painted in green. They held now a spear, now a calumet, now a stick, sometimes a tomahawk, a fan, or the old-

⁴ For the use of charcoal in connection with ritual, see La Flesche, *The Rite of Vigil*, and *Rite of the Wa-xo'-be*.

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fashioned war hatchet. Tufts of swan's down, eagle feathers, buffalo tails, small calabashes filled with pebbles, skins of white wolf and of panther were also parts of their attire, with the wings of calumet bird (the bald eagle) which they used as a fan. The bravest warriors carried the *corbeau*,⁵ the Head Chief alone held in his hand the well-known *bâton croche*.

The *corbeau* is an ornament made with the feathers of the crow; it is tied to an embroidered sash on the back of the wearer. The head and tail of the animal are the two ends of a waving mass of black feathers, attached to a cushion from which project four curved branches provided with porcupine quills and ending in a cluster of little bells. The side of the cushion which touches the body of the dancer is convex, so that when he jerks the branches violently, the feathers wave and the bells tinkle. The brave who has killed and scalped a man in the midst of his companions is the only one entitled to wear the crow during war dances. This ornament is carefully kept in a case of hardened bison skin; it is never worn on expeditions.

The *bâton croche* is a stick bent to a semicircular shape and ornamented with swansdown; little bells and eagle feathers hang to the convex part of its curve.⁶ It is the ensign of the red warriors, the flag which has to be brought back in perfect condition. The council of braves alone can designate the one who will carry the *bâton croche* during the war expedition, and the one who obtains this distinction is for this reason acknowledged the bravest among the brave. He must be the first to rush to the enemy and show the road to victory to the Osage.

⁵ "This singular decoration is a large cushion, made of the skin of a crow, stuffed with any light material, and variously ornamented; it has two decorated sticks projecting from it upward, and a pendant one beneath; this apparatus is secured upon the buttocks by a girdle passing round the body."—E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 235. (This example was worn by an Oto.) See also Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 279, 282, 441 ff.

⁶ Plate 21 of the *Forty-fifth Annual Report* of the Bureau of American Ethnology shows two of these standards.

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When the expedition has been completed, the *bâton croche* is thrown into the fire and a new one is made when it is needed.

During the dances, the partisans, disheveled and emaciated by prolonged fasting, followed the dancers, now smoking their pipes with great calm, now crying and wailing in a heart-rending manner. During the meals, they served food to the braves and watched them while they ate, without participating.

The two groups danced thus around the lodges for a whole day, but at one hour before sunset both groups went outside the western part of the camp and began to turn around in a very limited space. Musicians accompanied their singing by striking on sticks or beating drums. They were placed between the camp and the dancers in order not to be between the latter and the rays of the sun. I was advised with much insistence not to walk between the warriors and the sun, for the latter is the powerful spirit which protects the warriors and smiles at them while they play. To my knowledge this is the only fact which might incline one to believe that the Osage have a special veneration for the sun.

As soon as one turn was completed, the two groups stopped, and a warrior, flourishing the weapon he was holding, came out of the ranks and cried: "The Osage nation is the bravest of nations. I am the bravest in the Osage nation." Then he boasted of one of his exploits, and the bands began to turn again. After each turn, he told of one feat. For this reason it takes quite a long time for a famous warrior to relate his exploits. The Indians usually speak of nothing but themselves; during the dances they consider themselves superior to the warriors of the bravest nations in the world. Modesty does not seem to be a natural virtue; is it a Christian characteristic? As soon as a brave has finished with the story of his exploits, the partisans support him by saying: "*Tanhêh nika-ouassa*" ("well done, my brave"),

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if the fact has been proved true. If there is any doubt, they remain silent.

When all the warriors had finished their boasting (they end by challenging their enemy), they formed a half-circle, the concave curve of which was in the direction of the setting sun. Each troop lined up on one side of the arc; then, sitting on their heels, the braves started a new dance. The warrior who was at the end nearest the center of the half-circle partly rose and began to shout while shaking his head; soon he rose completely and came to the center of the half-circle. Keeping time by jumping on both feet and assuming more or less picturesque postures, he imitated a warrior who discovers an enemy, runs after him, reaches him, strikes and kills him; suddenly he stopped and said; "*Tanhêh*" ("This is good," or rather, "That is enough"). The first brave of the other group then began his dance, then the second man of the first group, and so on, now on one side, now on the other, until the sun had disappeared below the horizon, for as soon as the sun has set the dances are brought to an end and the warriors go and eat. The partisans wash off their earth and break their fasting.

Such was the *danse du charbon* among the Osage. It is repeated for four days, at the end of which the war expedition sets out on its way.

Ishta-Ska, the son of our old friend Ouichinghêh, was one of the great warriors in the nation. Married and already a father, he wanted a friend, a brother in arms: he set his choice during the dances on a young warrior of the same age as he. According to the established custom, the two young men slept for two nights in the same lodge, covered with the same bison-skin; then they exchanged ornaments and arrows and called each other brother.

Such a friendship sworn solemnly is a strong but not unbreakable bond; it can be contracted only once in such manner

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unless one of the brothers should die. If he died in a battle, his companion should do everything humanly possible to attempt to save his body. If he ran away without saving at least the scalp of his brother, he would be dishonored and considered a false friend. After quarreling, friends may break their contract and separate; but if one wants to secure a new companion, he has difficulty finding a brave who will be attached to him. New friends demand that horses be given to them as a token of future faithfulness.

About forty young warriors and *lapâniés* did not want to take part in the charcoal dances, although they were encouraged by the partisans to do so and some of them had been whipped by the soldiers because of their dislike for war. They wished to prove that they were brave men, so, two days before the departure of the war expedition, they saddled their horses before daybreak and left separately, without saying where they were going. They returned to camp the very morning our braves were to leave and announced to the partisans that forty miles from the camp they had seen a large village with huge herds of horses. They did not dare investigate who had built these lodges because of their own small number. They supposed they were seven villages of Pawnee-Maha, which were thought to have united in order to attack us, or else they were Patoka camping there, on their way to Great Saline. Perhaps they were Patoka who, according to what the Chief Tséht-houka (The Buffalo) said, wanted to punish the Osage for disregarding treaties. One Patoka had, in fact, met a few Osage since the murder I mentioned and had threatened them with cruel reprisals.

Mr. Papin had promised the Osage that he would go to war with them. We were very eager to follow him; but he proved to us that our horses, although quite good, were neither fast enough nor strong enough to withstand the hardships of a war wherein no one ever unbridles his horse. Always on the watch, one has

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to mount his horse and run away, or attack at the moment he expects to satisfy his appetite, or when he has just stopped after a long ride. An Osage in retreat would not even wait for his father, our excellent host told us; if we remained behind, we would pay for our curiosity with our scalps. James, who had a better horse than I, accompanied Mr. Papin, who trusted me to replace him at the lodge.

We had often eaten from the warriors' pot, but this did not obligate us in any way. There is only one meal which is a formal pledge to follow the partisans: the last one eaten at the lodges is the "medicine pot." They give this name to a dish of beans boiled in water. On the day of departure, the warriors were invited to such a meal; Mr. Papin and James sat there. The partisans had shaved off their hair; they ate with the braves, who had washed off their charcoal and had put on their war paint.

After the meal, the war mats were unfolded and the war birds were taken from them.⁷ The war mats of the Osage correspond to a certain extent to the medicine sacks of certain nations. These mats are made of bison's hair in the shape of a portmanteau; the inside is of a finer texture. They contain the war birds, bags of white skin in which the scalps taken from the enemy are kept together with small pieces of wood, which determine the number and kinds of *coups* made by the warriors, a few shapeless pieces of stone and wood, which doubtless correspond to the manitous, and finally some ornaments with which the warriors adorn themselves when they prepare for death. On the mat string, there generally hangs a scalp.

The opening of the mat must be done by a warrior priest, who gives the brave the things he needs. The priest himself deposits the trophies there after the expedition is over and puts

⁷ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 404 ff.; and La Flesche, *Rite of the Wa-xo'-be. Natives de guerre* is Tixier's phrase.

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the bird back. The mat, constantly carried by the brave's first wife, must never touch the ground. On dismounting, the *Ouakau* ties it to her belt and drives a stake in the ground to hang it on while waiting for the lodge to be built. The Osage would never give up their war mats. If a warrior dies in the village, it is buried with him. It is never taken to a battle. The war bird alone adorns the back of the warrior.

Every brave told the rest of the inhabitants of the lodge the dreams he had had during the preceding night and drew unhappy or happy forebodings from them.

Toward ten o'clock in the morning, the partisans left the village on foot and without their arms; but their arms and horses were already at the top of a neighboring hill, which was the meeting-place.

The braves, riding beautiful horses, armed lightly and wrapped in their blankets, left the camp one after the other without saying good-bye to their wives and children. No one showed any sorrow. Sadness is an ill omen. Farewells show fear on the part of friends of not seeing each other again, and the Osage are fatalists. Suisse, Baptiste, and Joseph left in the same manner, but I cannot let the last one leave without describing his fine costume. He wore new *mitas* and moccasins, a beautiful, gold-laced, scarlet riding-coat with blue lapels, a white shirt with a frill, and a silk hat shaped like the hat of a middle-class European, but on which three rows of ribbons of contrasting colors shone, as well as three rows of multicolored feathers. Add to that his blue blanket and his American horse, "Fly," harnessed in the Osage style. "If the Pawnee kill me," Joseph said before leaving, "I want them to know that at least they were dealing with a man '*comme il faut*'." There is indeed an aristocracy everywhere.

The partisans had left the camp under the authority of the "Fire of the Old Men;" the number of warriors remaining with

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us was more than twice as great as the number of those who had departed. The braves had left their best weapons in the lodges, so we were in good condition to repulse an attack. It has happened many times that villages were defended by women alone, who drove off the enemy, inflicting severe casualties. Like the warriors, they can remove scalps expertly. The fair sex is never spared, for the savages do not turn up their noses at women's scalps, although the men's are more valuable. The women take their revenge by scalping those whom they have killed.

The Head Chief, enlisted as a mere brave, carried the glorious *bâton croche*. Three women followed the expedition, and the Woman Chief did not want to leave her husband. Was it through jealousy? Perhaps it was because her husband, wounded in the leg, endured such pain when riding on horseback that he was obliged to give up the expedition and come back to the camp the next day, handing the *bâton croche* to the valiant Man-chap-ché-mani.

The two groups which constituted the expedition were commanded by Main-poque⁸ and by Pichêh. They were supposed first to find out the exact position of the enemy camp discovered by the young warriors, to attack it and steal the horses, then visit the Rock Saline, drive the Pawnee away from it, and come back after reaching the Arkansas River.

The braves went to a hill about two miles away and stopped for two hours, during which several ceremonies took place. As they revolved around him the Partisan examined every warrior and according to the results of his examination formed two groups, the second of which was named the *Corps des Boeufs*⁹ for reasons unknown to me. The warriors who have eaten out of the medicine pot may not under any pretext refuse to follow

⁸ "Crippled" in the trader's dialect.—TIXIER.

⁹ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 275 ff.; La Flesche, *The Rite of Vigil*, 205-212.

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a partisan, but the latter retains the right to send back to the camp those who, according to his judgment, are not capable of carrying out his plans.

After the halt, they set out on a hunt, and the meat obtained in this manner was prepared and eaten before nightfall. After the meal, the detachment resumed its journey and did not stop until ten o'clock to camp in a wood. During this second stop, no fire was lighted and the Indians ate what was left of the morning meal. Sentinels were posted; every one wrapped himself in his blanket, holding his horse by the bridle, ready to jump on its back at the slightest signal of alarm.

The Osage are brave during the day but timorous at night, for they are afraid of apparitions or ghosts and of the more dangerous Pawnee, who might steal their horses; so they choose as secure a place as they can find to spend the night.

The next morning, the warriors shot off their guns, according to their custom, to be more sure they would fire, and loaded them again; then they set out again on their way. The Osage soon came across the tracks of a troop on foot which had been walking toward them but which had changed to another direction. It was a small party of Pawnee who, having heard the shots, had guessed that the Osage were coming. Arriving at the location of that large village which they were supposed to attack, our braves found neither lodges nor any trace of a camp's ever having been pitched there. By way of compensation they found a great many bison.

In the evening of the second day, they camped on the Arkansas on an island where a great many Arkansas fly-catchers were nesting. In the meantime there was dissension among the partisans—the expedition was poorly commanded. In fact, Joseph, having found an enemy party, gave the alarm, and the warriors who were preparing the meal left their cooking and jumped on their horses, leaving behind several wild horses

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which had been captured on the preceding day. The partisans, instead of having their men ride along the bottoms of the valleys, in order not to be seen, went in a straight line and were detected, so that, when they arrived at the place where the Pawnee had been seen, they found nothing but a garter. Its odor caused them to arrive at the conclusion that it belonged to a Pawnee-Maha, which the footprint of the moccasins amply verified. They were unable to reach the enemy.

Disgusted with the incapacity of their partisans, the warriors turned back and returned to the village at once, hardly taking the time to hunt and eat. Such a swift journey did not prevent some men who had very good horses from roping a few wild horses and capturing them. On the last day, Man-chap-ché-mani rode at some distance from the detachment lamenting the fact that he had not been able to fight. On arriving near the camp, the party found fresh tracks, supposedly left by a troop of at least fifty men. A trampled spot showed clearly that the enemy had made a medicine there. From this place a trail had been left in the precise direction of our camp. Our Osage thought we had been attacked, and their feeling of security gave place to serious anxiety; they galloped to a place within sight of the camp; but on seeing that everything was quiet, they thought of their dignity and resumed a slower pace to enter it.

In such expeditions, in spite of the partisan's authority, every one does almost as he pleases, but at the slightest danger all the braves gather together in an instant, ready to pounce upon the Pawnee. Now is the time to let the reader know about the means of warfare used by these eternal enemies.

The Pawnee-Maha, who live on the banks of the Nebraska or Platte River, are today the greatest enemies of the Osage. They do esteem the stealing of horses more highly than bringing back scalps. The purpose of their expeditions is to bring

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back the horses of the other nations.¹⁰ They risk their lives by going through the huge desert which separates them from the villages and the hunting grounds where the other nations spend part of the year. The war parties of the Pawnee are not numerous; six, eight, fifteen men at the most, armed with knives, arrows, axes, seldom with guns, set out without any provisions. They expect *Oua-Kondah* to provide them daily with a buffalo, and they prepare ambushes for the bison and shoot them with their bows and arrows. They know how to remain motionless until the animals have surrounded their hiding place, then they shoot the last one in the herd at leisure. Hardships, hunger, heat do not discourage them. Some young men die without seeing the enemy during their first expedition. It pains one to think of so much patience, sobriety, courage and energy used to steal horses.

When they finally have found tracks, the Maha have not yet completed their undertaking. Then they have to display all their clever schemes, all the resources of their fertile imagination. They follow these tracks and try to reach those who have left them. Doubly cautious and crafty, they erase their own tracks, never leaving any trace of their passing, for the enemy is constantly on the watch for them. They can no longer depend on killing animals, for the remnants would arouse suspicion: they live on roots, follow the river beds, or mingle their tracks with those which the other tribes have made in changing their camps. It is during the day that they travel and come to the new camp. Hiding in the woods, they wait until a man passes within range of their arrows; at night they concentrate their activity in stealing horses. Wrapped in the skins of bison, horses or deer, they prowl around the lodges; if the opportunity is not good

¹⁰ "Pawnees—when they attack in the prairies it is necessary to tie your horses head to head in a circle. They come round you with feathers, mantles, etc., fluttering—great whoops and yells that strike a panic into the horses."—Washington Irving, *Journals*, III, 180.

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enough, they wait until a more favorable night. They will follow a party, if need be, for a whole hunting expedition, even until this party reaches its own village.

Dark stormy nights are the ones the Pawnee choose by preference to attack. They can warn one another by imitating the cries of the wild animals, and also create anxiety among the horses and cause them to stampede; so the Osage claim that the Pawnee are sorcerers whose medicine can make nights darker, attract storms, put the warriors to sleep, and stampede the horses. But if all their other means have failed, there remains one last trick for them to do. One of them enters the camp of the enemy alone and without trying to hide his coming into it. He strokes the horses and, of course, does not arouse any suspicion; he cuts the tethers and the reins; then, suddenly jumping on a fast horse, he gallops away, uttering his war cry, while the horses scatter on the prairie, where the Pawnee will soon capture them. On other occasions, if all the warriors are asleep, he crawls into a lodge and silently kills and scalps a brave, whose horses he steals away afterwards. However, the Osage know these tricks, and during the summer hunting expedition of 1839 they took from the Pawnee eleven scalps, which are now drying in the village of the Little Osage.

The Maha do not lose courage; their warlike virtues are so great that one brave is often seen setting out by himself to go five or six hundred miles away to steal horses at the hazard of his life, for all the nations are at war with his tribe.¹¹

One Pawnee was hiding behind an Osage lodge, waiting

¹¹ For first hand accounts of the Pawnee Indians, see (among many): *Pike's Expeditions* (Coutes ed.), II, 532-36; Sibley, "Extracts from the Diary of Major Sibley," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, V (1927), 200-210; E. James, *Long's Expedition*, I, 240, II, 140-64, 203-220; John T. Irving, *Indian Sketches*; C. A. Murray, *Travels Through North America*, I, 253-447. Irving was among the Pawnee in 1833 and Murray two years later. The valuable papers of George Sibley, for years factor at Fort Osage, are in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society (Saint Louis) and of Lindenwood College (Saint Charles, Missouri).

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for a favorable moment. Man-chap-ché-mani, so rightly named, saw him and, crawling to him suddenly, arose and made him a prisoner. This young warrior was so ashamed to have let himself be taken by surprise that he thought death alone could atone for such disgrace. The Osage were willing, however, to restore him to liberty. "If you let me go," he said to them, "I shall come back to steal horses from you, for when I return to my village the women are going to say, 'Here is the one whom the Osage caught lying on the ground like a woman?'" He was asked whether he would like to stay and be adopted. "You want me to become an Osage, but my heart will remain that of a Pawnee warrior. And some day the Pawnee will run away with your horses." He asked for death; they tied him to the fatal post and he died like a brave man.

The salines cause much trouble among the red tribes. Each one claims it has the rights to them. There are in the Missouri Territory three salines which they often visit: the Great Saline, the Rock Saline, and the Cavern Saline. The Great Saline is well known nowadays; the Rock Saline is named thus on account of the thickness of the rock salt found there; Major Long has given a description of it.¹² Near the latter saline is a huge red cedar which the Pawnee worship fervently. The warriors frequently bring all kinds of offerings, and even make sacrifices to it. This tree doubtless is for the Pawnee the manitou of the saline. This is the one place on the prairie where the Osage go most frequently.¹³

Two years ago, Mr. Papin was among an expedition which was going to take salt from this saline. Thirty-two Pawnee were seen at a great distance making their supply. Twenty Osage warriors left to cut off their retreat. On seeing that they had

¹² Cf. E. James, *Long's Expedition*, III, 120.

¹³ For Great Saline, see n. 19, p. 250, *infra*; for the Rock Saline, n. 8, p. 240, *infra*.

DRAWN FROM LIFE BY VICTOR LAMBERT

The Charcoal Dance (Médicine du charbon)



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been detected, the salt gatherers tried to flee, but being on foot and pressed hard they were obliged to hide in an almost inaccessible shelter, leaving a wounded man at the saline. Chabé-Chinka approached to kill him; in spite of his precautions in hiding behind his horse, he exposed more than his foot, and the dying Pawnee shot an arrow which made horse riding impossible for Chabé-Chinka for a long time. The others were smoked out; had it not been for the intervention of our generous friend, the trader, all would have been killed and scalped. Giving in to his request, the Osage granted the Pawnee life and freedom. That he obtained such a concession from the Osage is proof of the great influence which Mr. Papin had with the latter tribe.

The Cavern Saline has been seen by Mr. Edouard Chouteau; it is located in almost unapproachable rocks, far from the hunting grounds of the Osage. For this reason they seldom go in that direction.

The Osage do not make war like the Pawnee; their aims are more noble: they want scalps. Horse stealing is far less important in their eyes. The Osage sometimes go out on a war expedition on foot; but usually their troops are on horseback and always rather numerous—seldom less than twenty-five men strong.

War among the redskins does not look at all like war among other nations. They like craftiness better than strength; there is more glory connected with outwitting the enemy than in taking many scalps from them. A partisan who brings back all his warriors has more credit than the chief whose party has killed several enemies but has lost one man. War among the redskins is a matching of tricks and cunning, in which intelligence has a great part. The greater number of scalps will be obtained by the craftier antagonist. It is during wartime that they display the energy, the cunning, the acuteness of perception which characterize them.

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When a war party has found the tracks of the enemy, it follows the trail in the same manner that a pack of hounds follows that of a stag, with the same craft, the same eagerness, the same tenacity; but at the same time it hides its own tracks and is careful not to be taken by surprise. The braves want to reach the foe without being detected, in order to attack them unexpectedly, but it often happens that the warriors meet, and the battle begins with a general firing of arms and private challenges. Then cunning is used, while they pretend they want peace. However, when the struggle is inevitable, every warrior seeks some shelter and uses every natural protection he can find. It is seldom that they will do the slightest manual labor to protect themselves. When a battle takes place in which the opponents are fighting at some distance from each other, there are frequent interruptions. When a warrior falls, his friends stop shooting arrows or bullets and surround him, singing the lugubrious "death song," while the enemy rushes forth shouting the "death cry." They come with the intention of taking the scalp of the victim, around whom the battle becomes more bloody and frightful than ever. No one sings for the braves who are now falling, but each tries to defend his scalp. The battle becomes a hand-to-hand fight, fought with tomahawks and knives, while the braves who have lost their weapons use their teeth and their nails to fell their enemies.

These battles seldom last very long. They are violent but of short duration, and it often happens that the victor, content with a scalp, abandons the field of battle to the vanquished. He has a scalp, his men are all alive—they, in fact, are often the cause of the brusque retreat of a victorious partisan for which the vanquished seek a reason in vain. Now the victor goes toward his village. But let a new plan come to his mind, and, prompted by ambition, he comes back and resumes the attack.

The partisan generally does not take an active part in the

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fight. He directs the movements of the braves for whose lives he is responsible. However, in a battle waged against the Patoka, a young Osage partisan, seeing his men on the point of being crushed by opponents in much greater number, sent an old man to the village to announce the death of the braves and went to die with his men.

Victorious partisans return to their village, proudly and bragging. They dispatch heralds to the nearby villages to tell the news of their victories. As the inhabitants are always ready to deny the truth of reports which have not been proved, the heralds carry a fragment of each scalp framed in a small circle covered with swansdown.

Then the women and the girls, wearing the costumes of the warriors and carrying their weapons, perform the dance of the scalps. They are naked down to the waist, and the space between the lines of tattooing which cover their bodies is painted red or yellow. Armed with tomahawks and making contortions and faces, they dance around the red pole to which the scalps are hanging. They are challenging the Pawnee.¹⁴

¹⁴ Cf. the Omaha. "Arrived at the village, some of the squaws, wives to the warriors of the party, assume the dress of their husbands, and, with the rods bearing the scalps in their hands, dance around a large post, reddened with vermillion, and, in concert with the young warriors, sing the war and scalp songs; the young warriors occasionally step into the ring of the dancers, and all keep time, with dance and song, to the loud beat of the gong. Into this dance are also admitted the relatives of the war party."

"This barbarous dance appears to delight them, and particularly the squaws, who are the principal actors, more than almost any other of their enjoyments.

"Indeed, it is to the squaws that many of these excursions are attributable, as those whose husbands have not been successful in war, frequently murmur, saying, 'You have had me for a wife for a long time, and have never yet gratified me with the scalp dance.'

"Those squaws, whose husbands or relatives have been killed during the excursions of the party, take no part in this blissful dance, but rub themselves with clay, and lament.

"This dance is repeated every night for two or three weeks, after which it is renewed occasionally for a twelvemonth. The scalps are often cut into slips, that many of the dancers may be accommodated with them; but this was never done with an intention to deceive, respecting the actual number of the enemy killed. After the termination of this ceremony, the scalps are either thrown away, or are used to decorate

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Scalps are so valuable to the savages that, if they are in a hurry, they would rather scalp a man than kill him. I have seen an Osage from whom a Pawnee had taken part of his scalp lock. Yet he had no other wound to show.

I have often used the expression *to make a coup*. It is time for me to make its meaning clear. To make a coup is to steal horses from the enemy. All this is difficult and brings much glory. It is almost impossible to take the savages by surprise; as we have seen previously, one has to use a thousand tricks and risk his life to steal horses from them. Once the robbery is accomplished, it is hard to run away, for the distances between villages are enormous, and the chances are that the robber will be stopped in his flight.

To strike an enemy is a deed as highly thought of by the redskins as that of killing or scalping; to inflict a wound on him in a hand-to-hand fight is enough, or merely to touch him with your hand while he is among his fellow tribesmen. The aggressor has to face the projectiles aimed at him, to go unprotected to the man whom he wants to strike, and to expose himself to the blows of all his enemies. It takes more courage to walk through a storm of bullets and arrows in order to touch a man who is armed and protected by his companions than to hit him from a distance. The Indians know that a coward can be a sharpshooter, a man who is able to kill the most valiant warriors from his shelter; so the man who strikes his enemy is considered a first-rate brave.¹⁵

Each one of these coups is honored in a different way. Those warriors who have killed a horse wear an eagle feather in their scalp locks. Those who have killed, scalped, or struck a man are

the leggings of the warrior, or to suspend from his medicine bag, or from the bridle of his saddle."—E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 85-86.

¹⁵ Very much the same was true of the Omaha; see E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 82.

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entitled to carry the tomahawk constantly and to wear the little bells.¹⁶

The scalps and the horses taken from the enemy belong to the victorious partisans. However, it often happens that in order to become popular they do not take advantage of this right and leave the horses and the scalps with those who have taken them. Their relinquishing these makes a great impression on the warriors, who, in the case of an unfortunate expedition, are more inclined to leniency and will follow the generous partisan yet another time.

If the partisan is vanquished, besides the shame of defeat he suffers, he must pay for the horses and the men who were captured or killed. The Osage, as well as all the other Indians, throw away their weapons only when they hinder their flight. The rapidity of their pace is amazing; one hundred miles (thirty-three leagues) are covered by them in a day without their stopping or eating, with an allowance of one hour for sleep. The next day they are ready to go with the same speed. They enter their villages during the night and show themselves only a few days after they arrive. If the Osage have been killed, that is to say, if some brave has lost his life, the partisan remains alone outside the village and enters either to be killed or to give his fortune in return for the life of the warrior. In case of the latter eventuality, he must wait for the inhabitants to come out and bring him the permission to do so.

War is a sort of religious ceremony destined to offer *Oua-Kondah* or the souls of the dead some Pawnee scalps. Among the Osage, war and religion are so intermingled that they cannot be considered separately, and, even if this digression is already long, I will write here about the religion of the Osage.

This religion is shrouded in great darkness; few white men

¹⁶ For the graded war honors among the Omaha and the decorations awarded for them, see Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 437-39.

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have known its true spirit. We only know that the Osage recognize a sovereign god whom they call *Oua-Kondah*,¹⁷ they seem to have established some differences between him and the Master of Life. Does this denomination designate only one of the attributes of the supreme being? God is the origin of all that is good and of all happiness. The Osage pray while singing and lighting the calumet,¹⁸ and when a misfortune happens, the Osage accept it, saying: "The Master of Life has allowed this." This is the same fatalism that characterized the Mohammedans.

They dread the evil spirit. This god, a protector of the Pawnee, allows the souls of the dead to come and roam on the earth during the night and torment the warriors. He is the author of all evil. They hope to avert his anger through fast and tears.

The Osage have manitous. They keep religiously in the war mats, and sometimes wear as ornaments, what could be considered their domestic gods. They worship them particularly, but change the object of their cult whenever they are dissatisfied with them.

They believe in an after-life, but they do not accept the idea of a resurrection of the body. The souls of the braves go to a beautiful hunting land where they find again the warriors who have preceded them there. They are happy, but the evil spirit may force them to roam on the earth during the night. The *lapâniés* and the cowards go to prairies provided with neither trees nor game. I have never been told whether the Indian women were entitled to the Osage heaven.

The warriors communicate with the souls of the dead and

¹⁷ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *op. cit.*, 597 ff.; Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 897-98.

¹⁸ See n. 42, p. 133, *supra*. Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *op. cit.*, 599: "Personal prayers were addressed directly to Wakonda. A man would take a pipe and go alone to the hills; there he would silently offer smoke and utter the call, Wakonda hol, while the moving cause, the purport of his prayer, would remain unexpressed in words. If his stress of feeling was great, he would leave the pipe on the ground where his appeal had been made. This form of prayer (made only by men) was called *Niniba-ha* (*niniba*, 'pipe'), 'addressing with the pipe'."

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with *Oua-Kondah*, through dreams which tell them of the future. Impressed with this belief, they look for dreams and wrack their brains to find explanations of them. Oneiromancy must have reached a highly perfected stage among them. Their confidence in it is so great that, if they dream they are going to die in a battle, they adorn themselves with certain ornaments contained in the war mats and seek death with extraordinary courage and coolness. They bid good-bye to their brothers, saying: "The Master of Life has ordered so."¹⁹

Formerly, human sacrifices were offered *Oua-Kondah*; for lack of prisoners, they used some poor people in the nation. The missionaries and the agents of the Fur Company have used their influence to suppress this dreadful custom. They have partly succeeded. However, prisoners are still tied to the stake and tortured; although often, if the traders ask them to do so, the Osage release them or else the nation adopts them.

Like Osage chiefs, the priests do not wear any distinctive mark. There are warriors who are doctors and priests at the same time. They hid from us when they fulfilled their functions. I have seen them, however, open and close the war mats without the slightest contortion.²⁰

The missionaries have tried to educate and convert the Osage; they have obtained some results in changing their morals to a certain extent, but have not succeeded in having them adopt Christian beliefs. Several sects have attempted this great enterprise, but as the missionaries of each one presented a different version of the religion, the Indians took for contradictions the various doctrines of the Christian religion.²¹

¹⁹ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *op. cit.*, 131 ff.

²⁰ Cf. Fletcher and La Flesche, *op. cit.*, 595. The only term these writers use is *keeper* of the sacred war packs, etc.

²¹ Harmony Mission, founded in 1821, has already been mentioned. Within a few years of this date, other missions established included Union on the Neosho above Fort Gibson, Dwight on Sallisaw Creek, some distance down the Arkansas, and a number of lesser stations. Consult Morse, *Report on Indian Affairs*, 203-235; Foreman, *Indians and Pioneers*, 92-103.

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They had the same argument for all the missionaries; after listening with deference to the teaching that an interpreter translated for them, they said: "We have our *Oua-Kondah* who reigns over us and we are satisfied with our worship of *Oua-Kondah*; our fathers have seen him and they have worshipped him. You are bringing us a new *Oua-Kondah* whom we do not know: you say that he is kind and great; can you say that he is more powerful than ours? Show us your *Oua-Kondah*, as our fathers have seen ours, and we shall worship your *Oua-Kondah*."

However, there is a ceremony which must have been brought to the Osage by the missionaries, for it looks very much like our baptism. A few days after the birth of a child, the male relatives gather, and, after a feast, the child is washed and is given a name, which he keeps until he has deserved a permanent name.²²

²² This very important ceremony is presented at length by La Flesche in his *Two Versions of the Child-naming Rite*.

X. THE GREAT SALINE

THE WOMAN-CHIEF—OSAGE CHILDREN—VISIT—A FIRE—A CLARINET—DISSENSIONS—A NEW WAR PARTY—THE HORSE OF THE KANSA—ALARMS—OSAGE WISDOM—CHONKÊH AND MAJAKITA—THE RETURN OF THE WARRIORS—WILD HORSES—BAPTISTE'S UNDERHAND DEALINGS—SEPARATION—THE PLUM TREES—SALT MARSHES—THE GRIZZLY BEAR—THE GREAT SALINE—MIRAGE—TRACKS OF THE PATOKA—BATTLE—ARROW-SHOOTING ON HORSEBACK—CROSSING THE ARKANSAS—DEATH OF AN OSAGE—HORSE-FLIES—MAN-CHAP-CHÉ-MANI—OSAGE HUSBANDS—NION-CHOU—THE LITTLE OSAGE—A SCALP—GENEROSITY OF MR. PAPIN—FAREWELLS—THE FRONTIER

AFTER the departure of the warriors, the camp was quite gloomy for a few hours, but it soon resumed its animation. The old chiefs were watching over the safety of every one. They had posted young men on the neighboring hills to signal whatever might occur that was out of the ordinary. Large herds of bison passed by, and every day Kanstanga brought me a load of fresh meat. However, grass was hard to find in the vicinity of the camp, so the *kangas* were obliged to lead the horses to pasture far from the camp, which necessitated a more active look-out, for several Pawnee on foot had been seen at some distance. The old men did not think a detachment should be sent after them.

The Head Chief came back to the village the day following his departure. A small wound which he had in his leg caused such pain that he had to give up going to war. He sent for me. When I had made a prescription for him, he presented his wife to me, for she had pains in her shoulder. I asked her some questions and had the story of her life.

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Majakita repudiated his first wife to marry Vitimé, the present Woman Chief; but the first wife did not put up with this affront. She avenged herself by striking her rival with a spear which, if it had been directed more accurately, doubtless would have caused her death. Since that time Vitimé felt violent pains in her shoulder, which I succeeded in soothing with flowers of white poppy, which are quite common on this part of the prairie.

In the Head Chief's lodge lived a warrior named *la Bredache*. This man, who a few years before was considered one of the most distinguished braves, suddenly gave up fighting and never left Majakita, except when the latter went to war.¹ The extremely effeminate appearance of this man, and his name, which was that of an hermaphrodite animal, gave me food for thought. Baptiste accused him of being the lover of the Woman-Chief; but the Osage tell only half of what they think.

The wives of the warriors who had left wailed regularly every morning. On the second day, instead of putting on clay to fast, they painted on their hair and cheeks four stripes alternately blue and red. Old Ouichinghêh told me that paint replaces earth during the absence of the husbands. This woman showed neither anxiety nor sadness, although her husband and two sons were at the war: her younger son, sixteen years old, was going to fight for the first time.

The women played at dice² among themselves or chatted quietly, sitting on their heels in front of the lodges. The *kangas*

¹ This phenomenon was of common enough occurrence among all the western tribes. Accounts of *bredaches* (or *berdaches*) among the Omaha will be found in the *Eleventh Annual Report* of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 378, 379, and among the Flatheads in the *Forty-fifth Annual Report*, 384. Catlin (*Letters*, II, 214-15) described a "dance of the Berdashe" among the Sac and Fox Indians and made a sketch of it (Plate 296). The delicacy of his terms implies that only homosexuals were permitted to take part in this dance and only after a public statement. Other writers by no means agree that *bredache* was homosexual.

² In the original Tixier speaks of the women playing *au plat* (dish); it has seemed best to translate this as *dice*. It is reported in greater detail in E. James, *Long's*

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played as formerly, and the little girls enjoyed themselves by imitating their mothers' actions. One walked on all fours like a horse loaded with luggage; after unloading her, her friends helped her to build a small lodge with stakes and a blanket; then all together, horses and horsewomen, got into it laughing. On other occasions they drove some pegs into the ground, making a sort of horse with it, and practiced climbing on its back.³

Pretty little Angami shocked me very much by an action which was justified, however, by the customs of the prairie. While her mother was making a remark, she ordered her to keep silent, which she did. A few days later, the daughter of Chabé (The Beaver), our neighbor, gave her mother a box on the ear: several matrons went to Chabé's lodge and began the tear song, which they sang for two hours, lamenting over the event. Rightly enough they thought the little girl was giving grievous signs of a bad character.

Such action was all the more blameworthy, as the Osage fathers and mothers show an extraordinary kindness and even

Expedition, I, 306-307: "A game, to which the squaws are very much devoted, is called by the Omawhaws *Kon-se-ke-da*, or plumstone-shooting. It bears some resemblance to that of dice. Five plumstones are provided, three of which are marked on one side only with a greater or smaller number of black dots or lines, and two of them are marked on both sides. They are, however, sometimes made of bone, of a rounded and flattened form, somewhat like an orbicular button-mould; the dots in this case being impressed. A wide dish, and a certain number of small sticks, by the way of counters, are also provided. Any number of persons may play at this game, and agreeably to the number engaged in it, is the quantity of sticks or counters. The plumstones or bones are placed in the dish, and a throw is made by simply jolting the vessel against the ground to cause the dice to rebound, and they are counted as they lie when they fall. The party plays around for the first throw. Whoever gains all the sticks in the course of the game, wins the stake. The throws succeed each other with so much rapidity, that we vainly endeavored to observe their laws of computation, which it was the sole business of an assistant to attend to."

"The squaws sometimes become so highly interested in this game as to neglect their food and ordinary occupations, sitting for a whole day, and perhaps night also, solely intent upon it, until the losers have nothing more to stake."

For dice games in general, see Culin, *Games of the North American Indian*, 44-227.

³ Cf. the account of children's games in Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 363-70.

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weakness in regard to their children. If there are spoiled children in this world, they are those of the Osage. The little warriors and the girls give orders and are waited on according to their wishes. When they have children, their turn to obey will come. The old mother is always the one who works the hardest in a lodge, and the young people look at her without moving. Chabé's son, a little five-year-old *kanga*, beat his sisters and mother when they did not yield immediately to his slightest wishes; the matrons did not get together to cry over the evil deed of the warrior-to-be who, as they said, was showing already the audacity which should be that of a brave.⁴

The old men are quite respected at the council because of their experience; in the villages, they fulfill the functions of heralds, and while they are on the watch, the young warriors smoke, chat, or sleep.

The young men one day gave the alarm in the camp. They had seen, they said, several horsemen coming toward our lodges, cautiously following the valleys. The council assembled at the fire of the old men and about thirty well-armed horsemen galloped toward the indicated place to find out who the newcomers were. They soon came back with forty horsemen and Ouachinka-Lâgri. The latter sat down at the council fire and told the old men that a messenger from the Patoka had come to remind him of the appointment at the Great Saline for the day of the full moon in July. As he wanted to join our troop to go to the Saline, he agreed with our old men to set fire to the prairie when he would fold his lodges to set out for the Saline. He paid us a long visit and confidentially entrusted Sophie to warn

⁴ "It is only when his pride is concerned, that the [Omaha] boy is obedient to the injunctions of his parents; on other occasions he disregards them, or replies only with ridicule. A boy in anger discharged an arrow at his mother, which penetrated her thigh; when, instead of chastising him for the act, she applauded his spirit, declaring him to be a gallant fellow having early promise as a great warrior. But though he does not scruple thus to insult his parents, he would unhesitatingly revenge an indignity offered them by another."—E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 23.

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her husband of what he had just told the Osage, for he had noticed in the council a fear of a vengeance by the Patoka.

Mr. Papin was very anxious to see this great nation.⁵ We were as curious as he was to join this fierce tribe for a few days. So far only one white man, Mr. Chouteau, had seen it on the prairie.⁶

From day to day our camp became more unpleasant. A dead horse was lying at a short distance from the lodges. Another had died near by, killed by the bite of a rattlesnake. An unbearable stench escaped from these bodies as well as from the skins which were drying and the meat which had been thrown away. The Osage discard meat two days after the animal has been killed, and considering in what abundance we lived, it is easy to imagine how much was disposed of. The grass became very scarce; the camp was full of dung, which the horses left around the stakes to which they were tied. Our long stay had allowed awful insects to multiply to a frightening extent. The drought had left most of the springs dry. The water which remained was changed into a liquid mud by the horses and *kangas*. It became imperative to move the camp to another location.

One morning Ouichinghêh told me that the warriors would return to the camp toward the middle of the day. She told me with precision the spot where they would appear when arriving. I did not give credit to this prediction, which seemed to me unbelievable; however, about noon the long file of our braves was seen at the very place the old woman had pointed out. They

⁵ Papin had evidently expressed his interest in the Comanche Indians earlier in the narrative, for at this moment he was away with the war party. Tixier had been left in charge of Papin's lodge during the latter's absence.

⁶ This is apparently a reference to Edward Chouteau, who later gave Tixier some account of the Comanche (see Part II, Chapter XI). The statement is somewhat exaggerated. Edward's uncle, Auguste Pierre Chouteau, had had contact with the Comanche, both as a trader and as a commissioner for the United States; in fact, A. P. Chouteau had been assisted by his brother, Paul Liguest, and the latter's son, Edward, in the course of extensive negotiations with the Comanche before his death in 1838.

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returned with a few stolen horses. I asked whether the war party had brought back any scalps. Mr. Papin answered me by saying that if the warriors had made a coup, the dogs would have warned me of it long before they had arrived; it is a constant fact, he added, that the dogs of the savages bark in a certain way when the partisans are bringing back some scalps.

Toward nightfall, fire was set to the prairie to let the band of Ouachinka-Lâgri know of the return of our warriors. A cool wind pushed forth the flames with great rapidity and when it was quite dark we saw a long trail of fire burning through the prairie with a crackling similar to that of crumpled dry brambles stirred by the wind. Here the blazing line on the other side of a hillock seemed to be interrupted suddenly and to fall to the foot of another hill. A reddish light, gradually lost in the smoke, crowned this huge picture, against which stood out the passing shadows of runaway horses and night birds.

In spite of our precautions, the horses frequently succeeded in freeing themselves from their tethers and ran about to graze; several times, they galloped back into the camp altogether, probably pursued by the wolves we heard howling at a distance in the desert. In order to put an invincible obstacle to this running loose at night, during which the Pawnee might have stolen them, we built between each one of the lodges, which formed the enclosure of the camp, a strong fence. In case of an attack it would form a substantial protection for us. This precaution did not prevent us from increasing our watchfulness when morning came, for it is generally one hour before daybreak that the war parties begin their attacks.

Chonkêh recovered his authority over the camp, and it was decided that the horsemen and their mounts needed a two-days' rest.

One Osage owned the body of a clarinet, to which he added a mouth piece and a reed of his own make and began to blow

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on this primitive instrument. By dint of patient studies, he succeeded in uttering three notes; but these three notes recurred constantly. Every evening our musician practiced for several hours. Those people who have had for neighbors beginner students of flageolet or cornet can imagine how pleased we were with this man.

Instrumental music has not reached an advanced stage of progress among the Osage. They accompany their singing with a fan with which they beat time on a stick; they also have *tsutséhs*, or whistles of reed, tambourines with two skins, and on great occasions they stretch a damp skin on a caldron; this is art in its infancy.⁷

During the last days of our stay, we were bothered by swarms of huge flies attracted by the debris of meat. The prairie fire had driven the bison away, and as we had not dried any meat a scarcity of food was beginning to be felt. The fires of Ouachinka-Lâgri announced it was time to join him.

The Head Chief told the warriors about Handsome Bird's visit and repeated his words. Baptiste interpreted them in his own way. He said that Ouachinka-Lâgri intended to make us fall into a trap while he would return to his village; then he came to tell us that the Patoka were angry at the white people and would not fail to kill us, and that the Osage, too weak to defend us, would give us up to the Comanche. We knew the character of the Osage too well to be deceived by these words. Baptiste's reason for acting thus was that he was personally afraid of reprisals and, sacrificing his interests to his own safety, was willing to bring back to Nion-Chou the merchandise he had taken along to trade.

Baptiste, however, made proselytes and Chonkêh was the first to side with him. On the other hand, the Head Chief

⁷ See n. 25, p. 180, *supra*. Cf. also Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 371-72.

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stated there was not danger in going to the Great Saline. The camp was divided in two groups when we packed off.

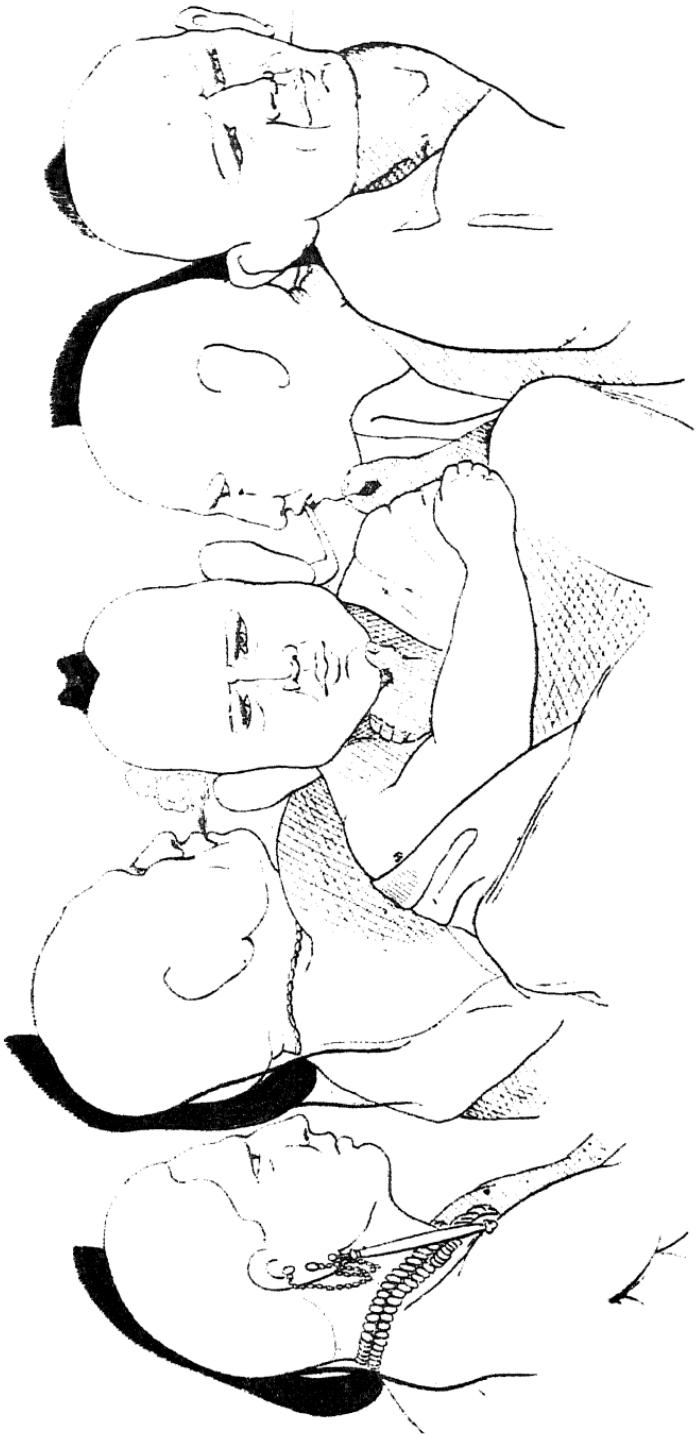
When time came to get on horseback, a young Kansa arrived starved and exhausted. He had lost his way and had been wandering on the prairie for ten days when our fires let him know of our location and guided him to our lodge. A man would not have lost his way but this was a boy only sixteen years old. He was given a horse and a piece of meat, then he went to join the Kansa, who were going along with us.

Going south, we had to cross a desolate country. The earth was covered with black cinders and half-burned grass. A few trees, their leaves reddened by the fire, showed that this destructive element had raged there. The aspect of the land was now quite different, no longer offering wide plains bordered with hills but ragged hills and deep ravines covered with thickets.

When we camped next, a new war party was raised. The men left without going through the *médecine du charbon*. The party was made up of thirty men, who were going to the Rock Saline⁸ and were to be back three nights later.

We spent our time hunting bison, but without much success. The warriors practiced shooting arrows on foot. Two blankets at one hundred and fifty paces served as targets. Any marks-

⁸ "The Rock Saline lies about 75 miles n.w. of the Grand Saline surrounded by naked mountains of red clay and gypsum. It is a level flat of hard red land of about 500 acres, thro' which passes a small stream, dividing it into two unequal parts, one fifth of which, or about 100 acres, being on the s.w. side, close under a tremendous hill, from the base of which issue Several Springs of Salt water, which gradually covers the plain and by the action of the Sun is in the dry hot seasons converted into a Solid mass of Salt several inches thick. There are also within this plain, 4 Springs of Salt water perfectly saturated around which are formed hollows covered with rock Salt from 12 to 20 inches in thickness...."—Sibley, quoted by Foreman, "Salt Works in Early Oklahoma," 479. Cf. also W. Julian Fessler (ed.), "Captain Nathan Boone's Journal," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, VII (1929), 89-90. The Rock Saline was on the Cimarron River not far west of the Ninety-ninth Meridian. The main body of the Osage may, therefore, have camped in Comanche County, Kansas, while the war party went to the Rock Saline.



DRAWN FROM LIFE BY VICTORIXIR

Osage Warriors
Chonkēh, Man-chap-ché-mani, La Grosse Tête,
Kansé-Tanga, Ta-onan Li

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man who missed them was excluded from the game; the winner was to hit the center of the blanket.

The *hand* game was played by eight Osage divided into two camps. One had to guess in which one of these constantly moving hands was the rock, which the players in the same camp passed from one to the other with incredible skill. A monotonous song accompanied this game.⁹

In the evening of the second day, a war party was signaled. It was traveling on foot straight toward us. It was composed of sixty Little Osage, who were going back to their camp located thirty miles away from ours. They spent the night with us. The day following their departure, one of the Kansa complained of having lost a horse which he had bought earlier from one of the warriors who had joined us the night before. As the redskins take back their property wherever they find it, without seeming to remember what they received in return, the Little Osage on foot had found it convenient to return to his lodge on his former horse, which he furtively took from the Kansa. When the latter went to claim his mount, it was returned to him. The Little Osage received a beating which left many a mark on his skin.

Two young men of the war party came back to the camp that evening bringing sad news with them. The party, they said, met the Patoka and all the Osage had been killed; they alone had been able to flee, thanks to the swiftness of their horses. Dismay spread over all the camp; the women cried and the council assembled. Messengers were immediately dispatched to Kahikéh-Tanga and to Ouachinka-Lâgri. Either of two plans was suggested. Should we not break camp and return to the villages? Such was Baptiste's opinion. Or should we join the other groups and wait? Now, the chiefs objected, the young

⁹ The hand game is described at length by Culin in *Games of the North American Indians*, 267-327.

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men are not necessarily to be believed. They may have lost their direction, or they may have been frightened by a first meeting with the enemy, and in the latter case, they are inventing a battle with Patoka to conceal their cowardice. It is wise to wait for a man¹⁰ to come and tell what happened. If no one comes two days after the date fixed for the return of the braves, we can entrench ourselves in a strong position and wait for events to occur.

A strong guard was organized for the evening. It was to be posted two hours after nightfall. Two warriors with good horses and well armed were bringing back the horses of each lodge when a shot was heard in the wood. The warriors seized their arms and entered the thicket, uttering their war cry. They only found a wolf, killed by a bullet, and a young Osage hidden nearby. The *kanga* was looking in the bush for his horses when he caught a glimpse of this wolf hiding in the brambles, and thinking it was a Pawnee, he shot it; but on hearing the cries of the Osage, he thought it more prudent to hide himself, for fear that in the excitement he might be mistaken for an enemy, because of the darkness, and treated as such.

In spite of the signs which announced a storm, the warriors went to the posts they had been assigned to for the night: the storm approached rapidly and finally burst over us. It was dreadful. Rain soon drowned our fires; the flashes of lightning blinded us. Thunder roared relentlessly with a deafening noise. The frightened horses became restless and threatened to stampede. It was necessary to stroke them. In such a rain our blankets were soon made useless. It was the kind of night which the Pawnee generally choose for their coups. No one in France can realize what such a storm is like. Flashes of lightning and roars of thunder followed each other without any interruption the

¹⁰ "To wait for a man *comme il faut*," Tixier wrote. He meant a proper man, a proven man, in contrast to a mere boy.

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whole night. Thunderbolts in the midst of a downpour driven by a furious wind, fell repeatedly and broke down trees.

Chonkêh wished to break camp the following day. He decided to wait until twelve to allow the skins to dry, according to custom. The partisan was following Baptiste's suggestions. When everything was dry, he ordered the camp to fold the lodges. The Head Chief sent a messenger to tell us not to fold ours, because he did not want to leave before the return of our war party, since the braves, wounded perhaps, would need some urgent help and would not be in a condition to follow our tracks as far as a new camp.

From all sides, horses were brought back from pasture. The skins were folded. Majakita's war horse was in front of this lodge, and the descendant of the White Hairs, dressed in his most magnificent costume and armed with his long spear, leaped into the saddle. He was going to make use of his sovereign authority. He rode around the camp and gave orders to build the lodges again. His order was executed immediately without murmurs. The most submissive white man would not have obeyed without saying at least that, if the order had come a little sooner, he would have been spared the trouble of removing and replacing the skins.

The costume of the Head Chief had produced all the effect which he doubtless expected of it. He had added to his usual clothes something pertaining to civilized countries. His large red riding coat, with its lapels, collar, and cuffs of blue, was gold laced. A silver military belt was buckled around his waist, and he had on his close-shaven head a huge three-cornered hat topped by a tall red plume. Nothing could be more ridiculous than Majakita assuming airs of importance in his hybrid costume.

On the same evening, our warriors returned in perfect health, bringing back big lumps of rock salt hanging from the

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pommels of their saddles. They related that, having seen a war party on horseback at a distance, they had pounced upon it. There had been some shooting on both sides which had hurt no one. When they came nearer, the Osage recognized their friends the Kansa, who were returning from the Rock Saline. The two bearers of bad news had run away before the nature of the enemy had been found out. The Osage hunted bison and wild horses with their allies and returned to the camp.

The two young men who had spread the alarm were followers of Baptiste, and it is quite probable that it was at his suggestion that they had brought back such sinister news, to induce the village to turn about. The truth would necessarily have been discovered, but the half-breed knew that, once on their way, the Osage would not have retraced their steps again.

Large herds of wild horses roamed in the vicinity. About fifty horsemen, armed only with their bows in case of need, set out with the long stick, at a fork of which hung a long rope made of skin and tied into a wide noose, which the hunter was to pass around the horse's neck. Nine horses were taken in this manner and brought back to the camp.

The Creoles call those horses *marrons*¹¹ which live untamed on the huge prairies of the two Americas. These horses descend as they say from those which the conquerors of Mexico lost. Their number has been increased with all those which ran away from the inhabitants of the border. They are a mixture of Andalusian and English breeds. They are well built in general and rather fat. They live in not too numerous herds on the prairies of Northern America; but one can see such herds frequently. All the savages hunt them actively.

As soon as they cross the Arkansas River, the Osage provide

¹¹ *Marrons* was applied equally to cattle descended from stock once domestic (Robin, *Voyages*, III, 65). The term *maroon*, as applied to runaway slaves and their descendants, is from this same word. The French word is generally thought a contraction of the Spanish *cimarron*.

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themselves with thin sticks eight or ten feet long and ending in a small fork. When they arrive at the prairies where one begins to see wild horses, that is to say a hundred and fifty or two hundred miles from the Arkansas, they send out scouts who are to look for bison and horses. If their search has been successful, they come back zigzagging, going to the partisan, to whom they give an account of their mission. The council assembles, and if the report announces a sufficient number of horses around the camp, the hunt is decided upon and the warriors are informed of it.

Their mounts are brought immediately. The hunters ride bareback, provided with their bows and quivers, and also the long forked stick; the strap of the noose, as well as the reins of the horse, is tied to the belt of the rider. They leave the camp and ride sometimes ten or fifteen miles before reaching the horses.

While hunting horses, as well as while hunting the bison, there are soldiers whose duties are to have the partisan's orders respected, for the latter gives the same chances to everyone; woe to the one who goes beyond the line of soldiers! The wild horses run away as soon as they see the hunters, and are soon far ahead of them. For this reason the swiftest horses always escape. At a signal from their chief, the Indians gallop after them, uttering their war cry and separating into small groups. They arrive nearer the fugitives; frightened, the horses crowd and push one another, then separate, running to and fro. If the wild horses ran in a straight line, the Osage horses would never reach them, but they make turns which the pursuers cut short; so the latter gain distance while not tiring themselves as much. Besides they relay and drive the pursued horse from one to another. The struggle is fair only when the distance between the hunter and the wild horse is very small. But the horse grows tired and soon the savage, with the help of the stick, succeeds in slipping the lariat around the horse's neck.

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The prisoner tries to run away, but the noose draws tighter; the horse jumps, kicks, prances, but, too tired, has to stop and often falls down motionless. Two Osage on horseback make it walk between them, each holding it with a thong. They watch all of its motions; when it stops, they force it to walk and finally to gallop. This manner of catching a wild horse is not so spectacular as the Mexican method, which requires an excellent horse, both strong and intelligent, as well as a horseman skillful with the lariat.

Once they are brought to the camp, the wild horses are tied securely to trees with a great many long straps, which hold their heads and the middle parts of their bodies. When they show restlessness, they are blindfolded. It is a principle of the Osage to bleed them during their first week of captivity. After two weeks, generally, the wild horses, freed from their shackles, follow the journeying tribe without trying to run away.¹²

During this hunt, Majakita, fell from his horse and broke his right collar bone. My colleague¹³ and I had the honor to be sent for by his Osage highness and to apply a dressing made of bands of colors. But the unruly patient could not force himself to bear this dressing, so I had to give up the idea of making him do so. I warned him of the accidents which might result, that movement might cause a faulty setting of the bones, but no argument could make him let himself be treated methodically.

I soon had another instance of this stubborn hostile attitude toward any sort of dressing. A young child broke the lower part of his radius. His mother did not want to leave the dressing in place, and the child healed but with a misshapen limb. The redskins do not react in this manner for fear of the physical pain, for they submit to very painful operations without winking an

¹² For other accounts of the catching and taming of wild horses, see Catlin, *Letters*, II, 57-60, and Plates 160-62; Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 206-210.

¹³ Trudeau.

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eye, but these children of nature are afraid of a prolonged constraint.

We camped about fifteen miles from there. There were symptoms of a great restlessness shown among our Osage. Two distinct parties took shape. One, which recognized Chonkêh for apparent chief, and our friend, Baptiste, for secret chief, did not want to join Ouachinka-Lâgri or to trade with the Patoka. Baptiste's partisans intended to return to the open prairies, where large herds of bison were supposed to be found. The other party, led by the Head Chief and Mr. Papin, wanted to go to the Great Saline. When camp was broken, the two parties separated; Chonkêh went toward the northeast with his troop, and we went on our way toward the Saline.

At first Baptiste had followed Chonkêh; however, he soon joined us with all his family and camped with us; he was probably afraid of being considered a coward by the Osage and of losing thus a great number of admirers.

During our journey, several warriors and a few women left the caravan and galloped away; I followed them. We soon arrived at a thicket of plum trees. These small trees, which are found only on the banks of the Arkansas River and its tributaries, cover a large area. They are hardly two and one-half feet high. The plums, as big and red as large cherries, load the tree so heavily that the whole thicket looks red. Everyone ate more than he should, but this voracity was justified by a complete lack of fruit in our diet. After eating these excellent plums, we filled our pockets and our blankets with them, and we gave them to those who did not have any. As we journeyed, the plum trees became more common and we soon had some severe cases of fever and dysentery in the camp.¹⁴

¹⁴ Sibley found these plums near the Great Saline and described them, briefly, as Tixier did ("Extracts from Diary," 213).

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We camped at the Cedar.¹⁵ At this place a savage showed me two cottonwoods which were about three hundred miles from Nion-Chou. An Osage war party on foot had made a coup in that place the preceding year and had returned to the houses in three days. This nation is well known for its walkers, and rightly so. When an Osage horseman travels with an Osage walker, he is soon passed by the pedestrian—even before the third day. Often during our trips we saw the walkers stopping for us to join them, or easily walking ahead of us without showing any haste.¹⁶ During the night we spent near these trees, we were deafened by swarms of grasshoppers which made a continuous noise.

We arrived at our last camp toward July 20. The prairie was arid and rolling, the horizon bordered by very high ridges. Several rivers shaded by beautiful trees were winding between the hills. At every step one encountered dried salt marshes on which the crystallized salt had left a white crust, which our horses licked while walking. We camped in a strong location well protected by deep ravines. There was a great abundance of game on the plains; antelope and Canadian stag, (the latter in this country is confused with the elk, which has become very scarce), buffalo and deer were seen frequently, and black bears and grizzly bears dwelt in the deep valleys covered with thickets.

This famous grizzly bear is so ferocious that when the Osage wish to attack it they raise a war party often fifty men strong. To kill one of these animals is a deed very highly thought of by the redskins. The victorious hunter is entitled to wear a necklace made with its claws. This ornament is very highly prized by the savages. I have seen in Saint Louis a Sac refuse a large sum of money offered for one of these ornaments.¹⁷

¹⁵ Apparently they were now a day's journey north of the Rock Saline; it is not possible to locate the "Cedar" more definitely.

¹⁶ Many writers made such reports. Cf. Nuttall, *Journal*, 246, who declared a walk of sixty miles in one day not uncommon.

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We waited for several days for the fires which were to announce the arrival of the Patoka or Ouachinka-Lâgri. Nothing came, so it was decided that we should go and get salt at the Great Saline (*Niskurêh-Tanga*) and that the fire set to the prairie would let the Comanche know of our arrival, if they were around. The weather had been beautiful for five or six days and we hoped, therefore, to find salt in abundant quantity. The dryness of the weather is very important, for the salt of this saline is a fine powder in such thin layers that the slightest rain melts it immediately, it crystallizes only when the sand with which it is mixed is perfectly dry. After a long drought, this layer is sometimes four inches thick.

One morning more than two hours before sunrise we left for the Saline. Our troop included fifty or sixty horsemen, followed by horses and mules laden with bags of skin with which to pack the salt we would gather. We traveled fast, for the Great Saline was twenty-five miles away, and we were to be back before nightfall. After crossing several creeks which flow into the Niskurêh-Tanga River, we saw a mirage which appeared as the sun rose. A rather thick mist covered the Great Saline. The dung of the buffaloes seemed so large that we, the white people, who did not expect a mirage, thought they were herds of bison grazing at a distance. The Osage to whom we told this were so well acquainted with this deceiving phenomenon that even the women made fun of us. We soon recognized a mirage on noticing that the legs of the horses walking ahead of us seemed unusually large. Everything resumed its normal shape as soon as the sun had dispelled the mist, which from a distance looked like a large expanse of water.¹⁸ The Saline then

¹⁷ For a more detailed account of the grizzly, see E. James, *Long's Expedition*, III, 45-51.

¹⁸ "Such was the effect of Mirage on the plain that we could not see across it, and the buffalo bones whitening in the sun looked like large, white animals in the distance. Buffalo appeared to be standing in water, and, in fact, the whole plain appeared as if surrounded by water."—Fessler (ed.), "Boone's Journal," 75.

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appeared like a large smooth plain, nine miles wide and a great deal more in length, limited on the south by high hills and on the north by the river to which it gives its name.¹⁹ The salt formed a crust a few *lignes* thick on which we saw the recent footprints of a troop of mules leading toward a spot where a great many horses and mules had trampled and toward which also converged a double track of horses coming from the opposite direction. It was probable that the Patoka had come to the meeting place and had traded with someone else. Baptiste preferred to think that they were the tracks of enemies.

This man insisted upon betting that if a bullet were shot on the saline it would be found at the end of a very straight groove. He had a savage shoot with a gun aimed at the ground very obliquely. What he had told was proved correct; we found the bullet at the end of a perfectly straight groove. It was worn off only on one side, which proved that the projectiles of fire arms do not revolve around their horizontal axis. We noticed also that the scratches on the bullet which resulted from friction were parallel to its diameter and not concentric, as they would have been if there had been rotation around the vertical axis. It would be of some interest to renew this experiment.

The salt was not crystallized in large enough amount for us to gather it pure. Therefore we filled the bags with a mixture of salt and sand with which we loaded our horses. A few Osage had hunted those bison which are always found near the salines. Their hunting was profitable, so we had an abundant meal. Then we got on our horses and came back at a gallop, stopping six miles from the camp to have a dessert of excellent wild plums.

¹⁹ Sibley visited the Great Saline with the Osage in 1811 (consult his "Diary," 213-17). Foreman ("Salt Works in Early Oklahoma," 477-80) quotes other descriptions by Sibley. Apparently what Boone referred to as the Pawnee Salt Plain is our Great Saline (Fessler [ed.], "Boone's Journal," 75). The Salt Plain lay between the Niskuréh-Tanga (Nescatunga or Grand Saline) now known as the Salt Fork of the Arkansas, and the Cimarron River, west of the Ninety-eighth Meridian.

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The following day was spent preparing salt. The sand was boiled in large basins full of water, dissolving the salt. The sand was thrown away, and by evaporation we had pure salt at the bottom of the boiler.

While the women were busy doing this, warriors came to the camp to say that they had found near the camp two horses of Ouachinka-Lâgri's band that had been shot with several bullets. Near the spot where they had fallen were traces of a recent battle. Quite a few scouts left to verify this account and they brought back the same information.

When night drew near, it was signaled that three horsemen had been seen galloping around the camp. The young warriors hastened to take arms, jumped on their horses, and rode away toward the enemy. The horses were brought back to the camp. Soon the young men came back; they had seen nothing but a few wild horses which, at a distance, had been mistaken for horsemen.

Long and frightful storms detained us for a considerable time near the Great Saline. One day the Osage, because of a growing darkness, brought their horses in and were surprised to see that we left ours in the pasture. They came to tell us we should bring them to the lodge. They could not conceive of such stubbornness; they thought it was nightfall, and we could not make them understand that the sun would not set for at least an hour. In the meantime the sky turned clear and the Osage released their horses, saying "These French people have a medicine to know the time." This medicine was our watches.

We broke camp to go to the villages. Nothing of importance happened during our trip from the Great Saline to the Arkansas River, *Nhi-Sudgêh* ("The Cauldron of Water"). Now we ate little, now we lived in abundance. The Osage had secured rather large provisions and decided definitely to go back home. The camp where we found the largest number of bison was on the

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River Bahabêh.²⁰ This river was named for the father of our savage. Bahabêh, the great warrior, was killed on its banks nearly ten years ago in a bloody battle against the Patoka.²¹ The Osage were retreating, harassed by these dangerous opponents. Bahabêh had distinguished himself by his courage on several occasions, and one day especially by striking an enemy chief. The next day a new fight started, but the warrior who has made a coup is supposed to die the next day, if the two battles take place in two days. Bahabêh, noticing that the enemy was getting ready to attack, opened his war mat and dressed as a man who is going to die. He left and did not come back. The river has since borne the name of this brave. It frequently happens that a place receives the name of a man who died there.

At the same time there had been a great battle between the Osage and the Patoka thirty miles from this place. Many warriors had died and had not been buried. I was quite anxious to visit this battlefield to collect skulls of both nations. I intended to raise a small party to go there, but I had to give up my plan. We traveled twice during the day, and I soon found that we were too far away for me to think of this expedition. In the evening a prairie camp was made, that is to say, the lodges were not built. Stakes were driven into the ground, supporting skins stretched vertically which sheltered us from the west.

Nearby there were many coveys of wild turkeys, which were already quite large. We ate some with great pleasure. I kept a couple of these birds which I wanted to take back to France. Ouichinghêh built a cage for me with flexible branches. I put my birds into it and it was placed on the back of a pack horse.

²⁰ Boone said that the Osage called this Pa-ha-bee; Fessler identified it as Bluff Creek (Fessler [ed.], "Boone's Journal," 72, and note 25). It flows southeast through Harper County and through the corner of Sumner County, Kansas, to join the Chikaskia River in the northern part of Kay County, Oklahoma. Tixier probably crossed Bluff Creek in Harper County.

²¹ "Pa-ha-bee Creek, called so by the Osage from the man who was killed there." —Fessler (ed.), "Boone's Journal," 76.

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They got used to captivity in a few days and grew so large in a short time that I had to have a larger cage built for them. I took them along to the *Crêtes de Coq*, where I restored them to liberty, having no corn or locusts or fresh meat to feed them.

Our provisioning being completed, the Osage organized a contest of a new kind, the prize for which was announced to the warriors.

A curved branch was stuck into the ground. From its top hung a trap supporting a narrow piece of meat six inches long. Men on horseback were supposed to shoot at this unsteady target with arrows. Dried branches placed twenty paces from the goal were to keep the shooters at a distance. A hundred men took part in the contest, all on horseback, riding bareback, armed with a bow and two arrows. They formed a line two hundred paces from the branch. At a signal the warriors left at a gallop and passing in front of the target, one after the other, they dropped their bridles, leaned so low that it looked as if they were going to fall, and shot their arrows while turning round. Their horses followed one another so very closely that frequently they came into contact.

When all the marksmen had passed, judges recovered the arrows, which (to avoid disputes) bore distinctive marks. All were stuck around the target within a circle of two feet in circumference. The piece of meat was so lacerated that it was necessary to change it. No arrow had remained affixed to it and for this reason no prize was given in this first turn.

The shooters had to run several times before all the prizes were given. As soon as the contestants had received their arrows from the hands of the judges, they went back to the line, then set out again at a gallop. These men, almost naked, riding bareback, leaned forward to take their aim, contracting their muscles while straightening on their chargers, and then shot while turning back. The target, which was struck repeatedly, was con-

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stantly swinging, and several times an arrow ran through it while it oscillated. This game was fascinating to watch.

The Osage are very skillful archers, but their way of shooting is quite different from that of the *Chevaliers de l'Arc*²² who practise their sport near Paris. Their bows are no more than three feet long, which makes a first difference; moreover they do not seem to aim, they shoot apparently through inspiration, looking at the target without worrying about the arrow. Once they have its location precisely, the arrow darts and seldom misses its goal. The bows are small but very stiff and powerful. An arrow which is shot from one of these often disappears completely in the body of a bison and the steel part of it comes out on the other side. I have seen an arrow which had penetrated the chest of a buffalo and was lodged in its cavity, bent between two ribs which propped both of its ends.

Gun shooting is quite different. The savages take a long aim and shoot accurately, but they seldom shoot birds in flight with either bow or gun. They were thrilled to see us shooting birds on the wing, and double shots brought cries of admiration from them. All their guns have flint locks. They take great care in renewing the priming often, and, as the use of the worm screw is unknown to them, they fire every morning those guns which have remained loaded during the night. They do not want percussion guns, because they cannot be supplied with percussion caps very easily, whereas flint is found everywhere in large quantities.

We were to cross the Arkansas River the day following the contest. The council had decided that immediately after the crossing, messengers would go to the villages and return to bring us the news. The water was very high when we reached the Arkansas River. Nevertheless I crossed on horseback, soaking the lower part of my body.

²² It is not clear whether Tixier here refers to an organization or merely to amateur archers in Paris.

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However, the pack horses were not able to swim across. Bull boats²³ were built for the luggage. Skins used for building the lodges were stretched and the edges raised and tied in such a way that they formed a boat in the shape of a square. Besides the luggage, young children and pups were put on board these frail craft. The men and the women took off their clothes and swam across, pushing the boats to the other side. The horses were driven into the Arkansas River, and when everything was on the other bank, the swimmers put on their clothes again and we resumed our journey.

A few years previously, Sophie had swum across at the same place, although pregnant and near her time to give birth to a child. The savage women engage in the hardest work until the last stage of their pregnancy. When sharp, frequent pains announce that delivery is near, the matrons, if the tribe is on its way, hastily build a round hut in which the woman in childbed is placed on skins. In the delivery, nature is generally allowed to take its course, and generally labor is terminated without accident. If difficulties arise which cannot be resolved by the rather slight knowledge of the red midwives, the patient dies with her child. When the birth is over, the mother remounts her horse, after having washed the child, which she puts to bed and ties firmly to the board which is to be its cradle.²⁴

We dismounted in a wood but did not build a lodge, for we were to spend the night on a nearby hill to avoid mosquitoes. In the evening, while we were getting ready to move to our other camp, a terrible storm burst; the flashes of lightning and claps of thunder blinded and almost deafened us. Rain poured so hard I had to empty my boots several times of the water

²³ A description of the making of a bull boat will be found in Fessler (ed.), "Boone's Journal," 84.

²⁴ For an account of childbirth among the Omaha, see E. James, *Long's Expedition*, II, 17 ff.

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which filled them. We had decided not to wrap ourselves in our blankets, since we preferred to protect our baggage from the torrent; this was the only way of keeping our clothes dry for the night. The prairie was completely flooded, but we had to resign ourselves to sleeping on this soaked turf. Traveling is not a bed of roses. It was impossible to light a fire to cook supper and to dry ourselves. For a month I had had a slow fever; it can be imagined how well I was satisfied when I stretched out on a bed of mud. The baggage was soaked and our tobacco so wet that we could not even console ourselves by smoking.

We remained in camp the following day in order to allow the skins and baggage to dry; then we left, making our way through the oak groves which border the Big Soldier River (*Nika-ouassa-tanga*) and which cover part of the beautiful hills of the *Crêtes-de-Coq*. We were delayed by the death of a young Osage, who succumbed to an attack of typhoid fever.

We waited to break camp until he had departed for the land of the souls. As soon as he had breathed his last, his widow began to weep and to wail; she went to each lodge clapping her hands three times and uttering three cries. When she had visited every lodge in the camp she returned to her own. The dead man was then placed in a sitting position, wrapped in a blanket, in full war paint, with his weapons around him; in this position he was lowered into a grave dug in advance. A small mound was soon raised over this new tomb. The heralds then gave the signal for the departure, and the widow remained alone with the body of her husband.

We crossed the *Pierre-Glissante*,²⁵ a pleasant river which flows over a bed of polished rock. The forests were beginning to appear larger, the vegetation more luxuriant. Groves of majestic

²⁵ It has not been possible to identify these two rivers (Big Soldier and La Pierre Glissante) nor the hills called by Tixier the Cretes-de-Coq. It is clear, however, that they were all between the Arkansas River and the Verdigris. The United States Geological Survey Quadrangles for this area show many unnamed creeks.

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oaks were now growing even on the hills, and beautiful landscapes of woods and prairies, intersected by rivers and strewn with boulders, delighted my eyes, which for so long had gazed on only vast steppes of grass and little clumps of trees.

The tall grasses were covered with a white substance in which horseflies breed. In Louisiana this substance is called rattlesnake spittle,²⁶ because it is believed that these reptiles leave their slime on the grass. There are to be found in each of these excretions three, four, or even five larvae of horseflies, which creep along the branches of the small plants. The horseflies were so numerous that to avoid them a suggestion was made to walk only at night. Mr. Papin objected to this plan strenuously, for he knew that once we started traveling at night, the Osage would head toward the villages without unsaddling, and he did not want to ride slowly and in one stretch the eighty miles which still separated us from Nion-Chou.

However, during the day we had to face those dreadful flies which attack men as well as horses. There was in particular a certain gray species, quite large in size, called *frappe-d'abord*,²⁷ for as soon as it has alighted on the skin it bites immediately. I have been bitten by this horsefly several times; the small wound that it makes remains painful for a long time. Horseflies are extremely common on the frontiers of Missouri and Arkansas, for there are no bison to eat the grass which bears their larvae; the grass is seldom burned, and these flies swarm in incredible numbers. When they attack a horse, they cover its neck, its buttocks, its belly; they take turns and bleed it white. The animal, tortured by pain, goes mad and runs until it falls dead. The horses which walk in file are less tormented, for the horseflies have a larger number of victims to prey upon. However, those which walk ahead are the first to be attacked, and the flies

²⁶ *Crachats de serpent à sonnettes.*

²⁷ Read (*Louisiana-French*, 39) calls this a deer-fly.

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which they arouse choose them for victims by preference. For this reason, when the Osage were traveling, each lodge had its horses walk ahead for about an hour.

We camped on the Verdigris, where we awaited the messengers. The two journeys that we made each day increased the fever which had been sapping my strength for so long; I was not able to sleep and I was really very sick: I tried in vain to sleep in the prairie lodge which had been hastily thrown together. Toward midnight, I saw Man-chap-ché-mani warming himself at a fire, so I went to sit with him.

After chatting a while, my kindly friend asked me if I had *frappé au poteau*, that is, if I had had relations with an Osage woman. He continued—"Ouakau, tanhēh!" ("a woman, that is good"), and offered to bring one to my lodge if I were willing to give him a piaster. Then he pointed to his wife, who was sleeping near us, and, after a little hesitation, said: "Manceska grêhbenan" ("Ten piasters"). I was afraid of offending this obliging savage by a refusal, so I pretended not to have understood. He did not repeat his offer.

Man-chap-ché-mani is, however, the nicest husband among the Osage. He is even made the butt of some jokes because of this; more than once I have seen him offer to aid his wife in her work. For example, when she went for water he would carry on his shoulder one of the ends of the pole from which the bucket was suspended. It must be added that the bucket was much closer to the wife than to the husband, but the very fact of his helping at all—so unusual among the redskins—revealed in him a deference rarely found. And this man offered me his wife for ten dollars! Queer thing!

The messengers returned with good news.²⁸ Nion-Chou was

²⁸ It was regularly the custom to send messengers ahead to discover the state of affairs at the village before the hunting or war party returned. See Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 431-34, for the opposite of the purpose noted by Tixier: to announce the success or failure of the expedition.

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quiet and we were being expected there. The Little Osage had been followed right up to their villages by a Pawnee war-party, the size of which was unknown, but it had several times tried to steal horses. It was believed at Nion-Chou that battle had taken place near the village of the Little Osage. That evening we camped along the river A-la-bête,²⁹ after having left the Coeurs-Tranquilles, who live on the banks of the Nion-Chou [Neosho].

The next day, at daybreak, the men went ahead and the women folded the lodges to go back to the village. We were at the burial mounds, and soon we dismounted to enter Mr. Papin's magnificent palace of logs, where we found the precious paraphernalia of civilization, chairs, tables, and especially beds, and Lord! what beds, even our servants could not sleep in them.

We feasted on green corn roasted on charcoal. This dish seemed excellent to us, but it is rather indigestible and lies heavily on the stomach. We had all forgotten how to use chairs and beds, so we slept and ate on the ground in the open.

The savages knew that we were going to leave them; they often came to visit us. They asked us not to forget them when we had crossed the Big Water. I could never forget the hospitality of the kindly Osage.

I learned that Ouachinka-Lâgri had seen the Patoka at the Great Saline. After setting fire to the prairie, he had waited for some time, and seeing that we did not come, he had gone farther on, joining the Patoka at the appointed place and trading with them—which explained the tracks we had detected on the ground.

Mr. Papin showed us two calves, out of ordinary cows by

²⁹ W. Irving said that this stream was called La Bête "because the Indians saw a great and terrible beast there, the like of which they never saw before or since" (*Journals*, III, 126). Labette Creek, as it is written today, rises in the southwestern part of Neosho County, Kansas, and flows south-southeast to enter the Neosho from the west in the southeast corner of Labette County, near the state line.

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bison. These animals were very unruly, although they were quite young; but it was hoped they might be tamed. They had been got by leading tame cows into the prairie and allowing them to run freely for a few days. Nothing would be easier than to rope young bison and try to domesticate them.

A warrior of the Little Osage brought a fragment of a scalp stretched on a wooden ring ornamented with swansdown. When he arrived at Nion-Chou, he displayed the scalp and boasted that the Little Osage were greater warriors than their brothers; he defied them to show a similar trophy.

The Great Osage replied that they had killed more Pawnee than their brothers and that they possessed a greater number of scalps.

Seven Pawnee followed the Little Osage right to their village, without being able to steal a single horse from them. When they were back at home, the Osage were warned of their presence by tracks which they found in the corn-fields, where the warriors had plucked some ears for food. Hidden in the woods, the Pawnee awaited their chance to steal horses before returning home. The Little Osage ambushed them and killed one of their men. The six others, closely pressed, threw away their weapons in order to flee more rapidly. These unfortunates, without arms, without moccasins, without mitas, without blankets, hid in the woods, exposed to the bites of a million mosquitoes. They could not return to their homes with their legs uncovered and barefoot; they did not dare try to steal corn, for the Osage were watching for them. They had to remain there, to wait, to make a coup, or die of hunger. However, Mr. Papin thought of a way to save their lives. He had no way of communicating with them. "If," he said, "these *vermin*, who know me and realize that I am to be trusted, were to come and sit by my fire during the night, I could hide them for a while. I would assemble the chiefs and say to them: 'There are some Pawnee

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with me, and you will have to let them go.' But there is no danger of their coming: those fellows never have any good ideas, and in any case, who knows where they are hidden? An Osage would not want to go tell them to come to me; he would much prefer to kill them, and that would not be much of a loss. But just the same, the whole thing is annoying. I shall have to have the old men eat with me in order to permit them to escape."

Our departure prevented us from learning the outcome of this dramatic story. If those unfortunates did not think of putting themselves under the protection of Mr. Papin, they have either starved to death or been scalped.

Baptiste coveted one of our horses, and knowing that we liked Indian curios he brought us one day the peace calumet of the Osage Nation.³⁰ This beautiful pipe somewhat resembled an oriental *chibouk*. It had a bowl of red clay circled with lead. The stem, three inches wide, and three feet long, was embellished with ornaments made of porcupine quills and birds' beaks painted green. Underneath hung a magnificent fan of feathers from the bald eagle, the calumet bird, and two tufts of yellow wool suspended to a thread. These were the symbols of peace. The feathers of the war calumet are painted red. He gave us this pipe for the horse which he wanted, but our horses' being common property, fate gave it to one of my traveling companions.

Mr. Papin did not wish to accept any remuneration for the expenses we had caused him. His kind hospitality was perfectly sincere.

August eighth we left the kindly nation which had welcomed us so well and set out toward civilized countries with Suisse, Man-chap-ché-mani, and his brother, since both of the latter wanted to accompany us as far as the Osage River. We camped at night without lodges, leaving our horses shackled

³⁰ For the calumet and the symbolic use of the birds etc., consult Hodge, *Hand-book*, "Calumet," I, 191-95, and the references there given.

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but free with a long *cabresse*³¹ dragging on the ground. As soon as we stopped, we were joined by about twelve of the most valiant Osage chiefs. They were going to see Mr. Edouard Chouteau, whom they knew to be at his farm on the Marmaton.³²

The next day, about eleven in the morning, we stopped near the border and took our last meal on Osage land. The warriors put on red paint and dressed. Three hours later we stopped at Duglass' house.

I thought I entered a palace of a kind. It was with infinite pleasure that I saw a book. I no longer heard the language of the Osage around me; everybody had a pale face and spoke English. But we looked like redskins, our faces were so weather beaten. For the first time in a long while I realized that I was poorly dressed, and I noticed with shame that my trousers were torn. I quickly concealed the tear with my cap and immediately went to mend it.

We were served a splendid meal, which seemed to include all the luxuries of civilization: excellent beef, milk, butter, potatoes, and corn bread! I had lost the habit of using forks and saw that my companions, like me, were on the point of seizing the food with their fingers. We looked at one another smiling and sacrificed to civilization by using forks. On the table there was a dish of *tchéra-ouas*, which we found excellent on the prairie but which we disregarded entirely at Duglass' house.

The *tchéra-ouas* are the roots of a water plant which looks very much like the water lily. The flowers, of a yellowish white color, have a pleasant odor; in the center, there is a bright yellow capsule in the shape of the spout of a watering pot, its upper part flat and half letting out five or six seeds of a deep black color. This plant is common in Louisiana; in the marshes of the prairies, it spreads its wide green leaves on the water. Six or

³¹ Halter or rope of horsehair. See Read, *Louisiana-French*, 132.

³² Here Tixier called it the *Lapânie*.

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eight canals, from which their name originated, run through the entire length of these roots. They taste somewhat like boiled chestnuts; they are flavored with bison fat.

Mr. Edouard Chouteau, who had returned to his farm, paid us a visit and advised us to have dinner with the savages who had come with us. We smoked a farewell calumet; we ate for the last time, thank Heavens, dried buffalo short-ribs and sausage in the Osage style.

XI. THE OSAGE RIVER

LOST HORSES—PAPAWS—DETAILS ABOUT THE PATOKA—THE CANOE—THE RAPIDS OF THE OSAGE RIVER—BEAUTIFUL NIGHT—OSCEOLA—MORE DOGS—WARSAW—THE MISSOURI—DEPARTURE

THE next day we left with Mr. Chouteau. Man-chap-ché-mani and his brother followed us as far as Colin's farm on the Osage River, three miles below Harmony Mission. The following day had been decided for our departure, but it was in vain that we looked for our horses, which we had released in the wood. By following their tracks, our savages were able to recover only two. What were we to do with all our baggage? We discussed the matter and decided that James would leave alone with the horses which were left, following the land route to Independence, while my two companions and I would go down the Osage River in a canoe to the Missouri River, where we would find steamboats to take us to Saint Louis. It was about a two-day journey.

We spent our last evening there sitting in front of the door eating papaw and watermelon.

The papaw tree (*Assimina triloba*) is a very graceful shrub; its thin, flexible stalk rises without any branches to a height of eighteen or twenty feet. Its branches bear leaves of a bright green color. Its fruit, which looks like a small cucumber, is yellowish green when ripe; it hangs under the branches in numerous clusters of pleasant appearance. They are attached by six or seven to a mutual pedicel and a fruit hangs at the point of junction of the others. The papaws, ripe in August or September, contain under a thin skin of soft yellowish pulp which keeps apart seeds as big as beans (and of the same shape) which contain a streaked kernel. The papaw is so sweet and fragrant

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that one soon gets tired of it. However, there are people who think it is delicious and eat large quantities. The trees which bear them seem to grow by preference on the low damp parts of the woods.¹

Mr. Edouard Chouteau gave us some details concerning the Patoka with whom he traded several times. He went along with the Osage on a summer hunting expedition when he saw the Comanche at Great Saline. He had a notion then of trading with the latter tribe and made an appointment with them. Familiar with the prairie, he left with two men to join these savages; but he came across a party of the same nation which, not knowing him, made him a prisoner. They were going to kill him when a warrior who had seen him with the Osage had him restored to liberty.² Since then he has learned the language of the Patoka; he is the only white man who can speak it.

The Comanche³ are numerous enough to raise ten thousand warriors. They are divided into tribes, of which each recognizes a head chief who is neither elective nor hereditary. This title is won by competition, if I may put it this way, for, in order to obtain it, one must have taken ten scalps from the enemy. The warrior who shows this number of scalps replaces the chief whose authority had been recognized by the tribe, and he himself yields the position when another brave has acquired rights

¹ In the original these are *assimines* and the *assiminier*. Cf. the descriptions by Robin, III, 482, and E. James, *Long's Expedition*, III, 189. For a discussion of the word and its variants *acmine* and *jasmine*, see Read, *Louisiana-French*, 79, 90-91, and Dorrance, 55.

² Just when this incident occurred we have not been able to determine. It is known that Edward Chouteau, in connection with the official activities of his uncle, August Pierre Chouteau, and his father Paul Liguest Chouteau, did have contact with the Comanches in 1836-38. See Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, 225 ff.

³ For contemporary descriptions, see T. James, *Three Years*, 196-227; Catlin, *Letters*, II, 60 ff.; Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 308-318. Consult also R. N. Richardson, *The Comanche Barrier to the South Plains Settlement*. Tixier's information seems to be derived from Edward Chouteau's personal experience. P. L. Chouteau in 1836 estimated the Comanche strength at 4,500 warriors (Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, 148).

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to sovereignty. It is needless to add that these tribes are extremely brave.

The life which is led by the Patoka keeps them further apart from the whites than any other people. They are nomadic tribes, following constantly, from Texas to Canada, the migrations of buffaloes, which are their exclusive source of food. However, it often happens that they run short of venison, when, for example, the buffaloes withdraw into the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, or when war prevents them from hunting. Then they eat some of their horses. The latter are a great resource to them; they raise huge herds and use them as a medium of exchange with the Osage, who obtain more or less vigorous hunters in return for a blanket, a bad rifle, or especially for a few cakes of rouge. They barter also for utensils or glass trinkets, giving in exchange beautiful buffalo robes, bleached and fringed with porcupine quills, or painted, fine pelts, calumets, etc. They have no idea of the value of money, which they do not want to receive. What could they do with it?

Their costume is more primitive than that of the Osage, which resembles it in shape. The moccasins are identical. The *mitas* of white deerskin are adorned with scalps. The bleached buffalo robes are ornamented with strange figures or covered with pictures representing wars or hunts. The hunting pictures made by the savages are quite odd; on the same skin one sees a hunter discovering a track; farther he is shown in the various stages of pursuit. One sees at the same time the beginning and the end of it. The hunter, built like an Egyptian, is seen several times. On other skins, yellow hunters riding blue horses are shown running after green and red bison.⁴

However, the well-dressed Patoka replace the buffalo robe by a blanket. Almost all the red tribes which live near the borders of the United States wear the blankets that have been sold

⁴ Cf. n. 12, p. 201, *supra*.

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to them. The Osage dandies decorate them with blue and red stripes of their own composition; but the Patoka modify theirs according to a different style; one half is red; the other white, blue, or green. They wear skin loin cloths. Their hair, which is long and loose, is braided into tresses, which hang on their necks, the latter being adorned with silver buckles and glass beads. Their wampums or necklaces are made of small shells or white pebbles. The women wear skirts and blouses of white skin, which are also decorated with paintings.

Their moves are always regulated by those of the bison; however, they remain on the prairie by preference, for they can find wood and water there quite easily; otherwise, they are forced to take along with them a supply of firewood and stakes, for they often go through huge prairies where there is not one single tree. One can find in their tribe a first indication of a carriage; they often pile up their baggage on poles which the horses drag behind them, and the women and children ride on top of the heap during the marches, ready to get up again if the whole conveyance overturns. They build a conical lodge with a hole pierced in the roof to let the smoke out. The winter lodges of the Osage have the same shape.

The brave Patoka are almost always at war. The Pawnee, the Shawnee, the Cheyenne or Chagaine, and the various tribes of the Sioux which include these latter, are their most terrible adversaries. They fight on horseback and usually in small bands. However, in the important wars, they form very strong battle groups.

One day of battle, nine hundred Comanche fought against five hundred Osage and a hundred Sauk. Three hundred men perished in that combat, but the Osage owed their victory to a novel bit of strategy. Rightly fearing to be crushed by force of numbers, they had dug some holes in the ground, and in these they hid, firing behind almost perfect cover. They remained

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masters of the battlefield, even though they did not carry away a decisive victory.

Dreaded by all the red nations, the Patoka fear the brave Shawnee, whose tremendous courage they recognize. A party of the latter, only fifty strong, camped near a Comanche village of two hundred lodges. A tin cup was stolen from them; they immediately sent one of their braves to announce that if the cup were not returned on the morrow at daybreak, they would attack the village. The mug was returned. This act of bravado, backed up with an unequalled courage, is typical of the character of the Shawnee.

The numerous horses of the Comanche aroused the envy of the other nations, who almost always succeeded in stealing a goodly number from them. Manka-Chonkēh (the Black Dog)⁵ carried off five hundred hunting ponies in a single night. The

⁵ Catlin in 1834 met this chief and painted his portrait (*Letters*, II, 42, and Plate 152). "Amongst the chiefs of the Osages, and probably the next in authority and respect in the tribe [to Clermont], is Tchong-tas-sab-bee, the Black Dog, whom I painted also at full length, with his pipe in one hand, and his tomahawk in the other; his head shaved, and ornamented with a beautiful crest of deer's hair, and his body wrapped in a huge mackinaw blanket.

"This dignitary, who is blind in the left eye, is one of the most conspicuous characters in all this country, rendered so by his huge size (standing in height and in girth, above all of his tribe), as well as by his extraordinary life. The Black Dog is familiarly known to all the officers of the army, as well as to Traders and all other white men, who have traversed these regions, and I believe, admired and respected by most of them.

"His height, I think, is seven feet; and his limbs full and rather fat, making his bulk formidable, and weighing, perhaps, some 250 or 300 pounds. This man is chief of ... 'Black Dog's Village'."

Foreman (*Advancing the Frontier*, 230) gives three other variants of his name: Shun-ka-sop-pah, Tahalah, Talalah. Boone (*Journal*, [ed.] Fessler, 88) gave his name as To-ca-sab-be, and Fessler (n. 55) rendered it as Tshonga-Sabba. J. M. Stanley, who painted Black Dog in 1843, called him Techong-Ta-Saba. Stanley declares that he was six feet six. "The name Black Dog was given to him from a circumstance which happened some years since, when on a war expedition against the Comanches. He, with his party, were about to surprise their camp on a very dark night, when a black dog, by his continued barking, kept them at bay. After several ineffectual attempts, being repelled by the dog, Techong-ta-saba became exasperated, and fired an arrow at random, hitting him in the head and causing instant death." Stanley relates also a war exploit of Black Dog's. See his "Portraits of North American Indians," *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Papers* (Article III, 1852), II (1862), 42-43.

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Osage were still at war with them. The chief did not want to leave without making known his name, so after making everything ready for a hasty get-away, he entered one of the lodges, struck a warrior with his tomahawk, saying: "I am Black Dog," and then disappearing into the shadows.

Their arms are the knives and rifles which they obtain by barter and the tomahawks and the arrows which they make themselves. The arrows are tipped with very hard and sharp silex stone instead of the usual iron. The boldness of these war-like savages is extreme. They know better than the others how to hide behind their horse's body, but they scorn this method; they charge upon the enemy with their chest exposed and their arms outstretched, shouting a war cry; they seem to call to themselves the arrows and the bullets. They do not fear death, for they believe that a brave who dies in battle will enjoy a happiness without limits, which they interpret in their own way. They attack the enemy within sight of his own camp and inspire such a fear in the nations that receive the war hatchet from them that the warriors do not dare leave their own camps. They want scalps at any cost; ten of them will make a warrior chief of his tribe; those of the women, however, do not count.

One can easily realize that they do not often take prisoners, yet they carry off with them the Indian women and children who remain after a village has been burned, and the whites who remain after a settlement has been plundered. This takes place, especially, on the Texas border. One remembers the affair of the Texas prisoners.⁶ Joe, the Mexican whom we had met at Nion-Chou, had been their prisoner for a long time, as I have already related. He had escaped on the back of a very fleet horse which his masters had told him to tame. The fate of the prisoners is as frightful as that of the captives of the savages of the Pampas.

⁶ See n. 65, p. 151, *supra*. Consult also Foreman, *Pioneer Days*, 269 ff.

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It would be better to have them tied at once to the stake and to make them perish in the torture.

The young boys are generally taken in or adopted in a fashion by a brave, whom they serve in the quality of a squire or a slave. When they grow up, they are allowed some freedom, for they cannot miss the family which they have hardly known, and they do not want to leave their masters.

The girls and the women become the wives of warriors; but their condition is always harder to bear than that of the Patoka women; they have to perform the most disagreeable duties in the lodge. However, those who do not disdain to be coquettish to please a red warrior, vermillion painted and adorned with bloody scalps, and who see in him only a man to placate, a brave hospitable man who can show greatness in misfortune, these philosophic women, as I said, can make their destiny sufferable.

The men prisoners are terribly maltreated. They are made to attend the work which women alone are supposed to do. This in itself is a mark of contempt; besides, they are forced to train the horses, which are reputed untamable. All the talents with which nature or education has provided them are put to use. They cannot think of getting married and if such a case occurred, the Comanche would make the prisoner atone by awful torture for such an insult to the nation.

Often the council of the warriors assembles, a prisoner is brought out, to whom it is announced that a terrible death is near. He is tied to a pole, the stakes are lighted, and the unfortunate thinks he is going to be freed from life and its torments. The torture begins. But suddenly the warriors stop, break the bonds of the prisoner, and start laughing. The braves were only seeking a cheerful diversion.

Flight is almost impossible, and unhappy is the fugitive who is recaptured. A slow and horrible death punishes the poor prisoner.

THE OSAGE RIVER

Despite these acts of barbarity, one finds great virtues among the Comanche. If they find a man who is lost, feeble, or wounded, even though he be an enemy, they take him in and give him food, cure him, and then send him away with presents. If he wishes to remain with them, they adopt him and treat him as a brother. An Osage called Patoka had been rescued by them when he was dying of hunger on the prairie; they harbored him for two years, even though in the meantime they were at war with the nation of their guest.

The Indians kill the strong men who are able to defend themselves and do them harm, but they never refuse aid to the feeble and inoffensive; they make welcome the needy and feed the unfortunate.

The next day we bought a canoe. We gave to the savages the blankets which for so long had served us as wraps, and we asked them to eat with us. I found nothing extraordinary in the behavior of my two Osage as they sat in their chairs, before a dish and with a fork in their hands; today I would laugh. This reminds me of an anecdote of old White Hair.

In 1820, the President of the United States called together at Washington the chiefs of the principal Indian nations. In order to give them an idea of the strength of the Americans, he showed them his troops of soldiers, his battleships, and made them understand that it would be to their advantage to remain at peace with the Manhêhs-Tangas instead of making war on them. Old White Hair was present at this meeting. An excellent meal was served to the chiefs, who considered themselves obliged, following the example of the Great Father (for so the Indians call the President of the United States) to make use of the fork. But soon getting tired of this instrument, which was completely strange to him, White Hair addressed the President. "Oua-Kondah," he said to him, "has given us hands to carry

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the food to our mouths, and you have given us instruments that we do not know how to use; let us make use of the hands Ouakondah has given us."

It was about twelve when we left the table. Everything was ready for our departure, including oars and paddles which we had made ourselves. The indispensable luggage, our arms, and a bag containing a few pounds of salt pork were on board. Mr. Edouard and Colin⁷ estimated the distance which separated us from the Missouri River to be sixty miles,⁸ and yet they showed fear and advised us to give up our plan. But I did not yield to their entreaties. To go down the rapids of the Osage River in a canoe was the necessary complement to what I had already accomplished. I stepped into the canoe, seized a paddle, and my two companions were soon ready to shove off. The brave Manchap-ché-mani and his father,⁹ both on horseback, came into the water to shake hands with us for the last time. The voice of the warrior showed emotion when he said to me "*Oéh, Ouakantaku-Chinka;*" then crossing the river he disappeared behind the trees with his companions. A pull on the oars brought us in the current, and the canoe was launched in the middle of the bubbling whirls of a rapid.

We soon lost sight of Colin's farm; the current carried us with surprising speed; moreover, in order to steer our canoe, it was necessary to row vigorously. All our attention was required in order to remain in deep water and to avoid the huge rocks which obstructed the passage. Our first attempt was successful; after navigating for five minutes on this furious torrent, we ar-

⁷ For Colin see n. 29, p. 109, *supra*.

⁸ It is possible that Chouteau and Colin meant that the travelers were about sixty miles from the Missouri, thinking of an overland route (though even that was nearer eighty miles). They surely could not have told Tixier that he was sixty miles from the Missouri by way of the Osage River.

⁹ The text here reads *père* though earlier it read *frère*. There is no way of determining which is correct.

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rived in calm water. We had been in danger of capsizing only twice.

The Osage River rises from several sources in the territory of Missouri north of Nion-Chou; it cuts across the Santa Fe trail and goes toward the south east, following several curves. It enters into the state of Missouri, and bears several miles past Harmony, Missouri, the name of Marais-des-Cygnes. It flows then toward the north east, describing a long sinuous course to join the Missouri on the right bank 144 miles above its confluence.¹⁰

All of the upper part of the Osage River is a succession of rapids, which gradually become scarcer while approaching its mouth, and are no longer found twelve or fifteen miles above the Missouri. These rapids are not very dangerous for canoes, but the water is too shallow for large boats.¹¹ Between the rapids the current is exceedingly slow, and when the Missouri is high there is a flowing back which almost stops the water of the Osage.

We had to fear neither turns nor waterfalls; we were scarcely afraid of anything, as the greatest risk we ran was to capsize and be somewhat drenched; this fear could certainly not stop us. We were then rowing spiritedly. Now our pirogue seemed to fly over the water, now our dugout tree¹² had to be propelled on the sluggish current. The first day there were many rapids, our arms were full of vigor, and, in spite of the awkward position in which we were sitting (for we could not bend our legs), we covered a great distance. At night there was beautiful moonlight. A delightful coolness gave us back our strength, and we cadenced our rowing by singing together the harmonious songs of the Canadian boatman.

¹⁰ The Osage rises in central Kansas, flows 150 miles east to the state line, and east 250 miles to enter the Missouri River between Osage and Cole Counties, Missouri.

¹¹ What Tixier means by the upper part of the Osage is not clear; steamboats were to come up the river for more than 200 miles. See n. 15, p. 278, *infra*.

¹² *Pirogue ... arbre creuse*, in the original text.

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*Nous irons sur l'eau
Nous y promener,
Nous irons jouer dans l'île.*¹³

The scenery was lovely on the river. The night was clear and through a transparent mist we saw the magnificent forest on the shore. We often dropped our oars while the pirogue glided silently along on the slowly moving river. I thoroughly enjoyed the charm of the beautiful night: my youthful dreams were realized; but soon we heard the roar of a rapid below us, and taking up our oars, we steered the canoe between the rocks we saw near the surface of the water.

We continued until midnight, but as our arms were getting numb with fatigue we had to think of taking some rest. For a long time we had looked for an accessible place to land, but the shore was high and steep. We decided to climb up the bank with the help of the roots which came out, and it was high time that we did, for hardly had we lighted a homeric fire when the moonlight was turned into darkness by an eclipse.

Then we satisfied an appetite which twelve hours of continuous, violent exercise had made ravenous. After supper, everyone sought as comfortable a position as possible to sleep. We watched in turn, listening attentively to protect the sleep of the others. Several times the sentinel heard dry branches creaking under a heavy step; this noise was made by bears, which probably came to investigate who was thus disturbing their solitude.

As soon as the red color of the sky toward the east announced daybreak, we quickly got into our pirogue, in spite of our drowsiness, and rowed away from our shelter of the night.

Cleared lands are far apart from one another; they are announced at a great distance by an empty space in the forest, or

¹³ We shall go on the water
For a boat ride,
We shall play on the Island.

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by series of gray branches, stillborn fruits of the trees which died the preceding year. The oldest farms present a cheerful appearance. A loghouse is built in a field covered with fine corn, surrounded on all sides by the woods still untrodden a short time before. More recent ones are still strewn about with trunks of trees blackened by fire, among which corn and pumpkins are growing. The houses of the settlers are poor cabins made of logs or boards poorly put together. Whole families are crowded in these, but a few years later the dead trees will disappear and the planters will move into better looking, more comfortable houses.

In the meantime, we were increasingly tired, and the river, becoming wider while we were rowing, also became slower. We had to row with greater energy to make progress; but we were exhausted, and often stretched in the pirogue to sleep for a little while. The sun was burning hot; the weather, which so far had been so beautiful, changed suddenly and torrents of rain began to pour. We sought shelter under the branches of the willow trees which were overhanging the water, intertwined with creepers and vines. Impenetrable to the rays of the sun, this shelter did not protect us very long from the rain and soon our horse blankets, the only ones we had taken, were useless. We missed our blankets and our bison robes which we had given to the savages, but it was too late.

In spite of the bad weather, we arrived in Osceola, the first town which is found on the route down the Osage River.¹⁴ In the month of August, 1840, Osceola was composed of eleven or twelve houses. The inhabitants, whom we found gathered in the store, were talking about politics; clad in the invariable black coat, they looked at us with suspicion, probably because of our beards, our poor attire, and our French accent; the tink-

¹⁴ The first house was built in Osceola in 1835-36; when Tixier passed through, the place had a population of fifty or sixty. The next year it was made the county seat of St. Clair County. Consult Streeton, *History of Henry and St. Clair Counties*, 981-99.

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ling of a few piasters brought more favorable looks. I wanted some milk to quench the thirst which was caused by the high fever, induced by fatigue, the heat, and the dampness. Will anyone believe me when I say that in this agricultural center it was impossible for me to find any? I was offered salted butter.

We left Osceola, and at about four o'clock we landed at a farm where at last I found a cup of milk. After resting for an hour, we went on our way very disappointed indeed, for we had just learned that it was 231 miles from Osceola to the mouth of the Osage River. Colin's farm being seventy miles above this city, we had 301 miles to cover instead of sixty as we had been told. We were so discouraged that we did not travel very far that evening. It was impossible to go back our way. Our pride would not have let us do so; on the other hand we could not take any other way on land. We landed and prepared the evening meal. But, alas, we had not yet seen the end of our misfortunes; we found our provision bag torn and empty; the dogs of the farm had devoured everything and, probably with the intention of mocking us, had left one bone, gnawed dry, at the bottom of the bag.

It was really a day of mourning; everything was against us, rain, fatigue, hunger, so we spent an unpleasant night. With a fever, an empty stomach, and no prospect of finding a settlement for two days, one sleeps badly. And then our camp was so uncomfortable! Damp sand covered the island on which we had stopped, our blankets were soaked wet, the mosquitoes harassed us mercilessly. And yet I would have forgotten all these troubles, had it not been for the fever, which burnt me up, and the prospect of fasting the following day. However, the fine philosophy which had been taught us by the Osage gained the upper hand and cheerfulness came back with it.

The next morning at the break of day, while passing under trees, we found a great many wild turkeys. They were kept out

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of the range of our guns, however, by the height of the branches on which they perched. These stupid birds stretched their necks to look at us while we passed. It was in vain that we tried to shoot some down. We steered and rowed and paddled in turn. Our hands were all blistered; almost unbearable pains in our legs were caused by the uncomfortable position we were forced to keep. I tried to dismiss my hunger and my burning fever in order not to leave all the work to my companions, but often, in spite of myself, I fell asleep in the bottom of the canoe.

We hoped to find a more rapid current and settlements. When we saw our hopes deceived, we became quite gloomy, especially in the evenings. We had seen nothing but deserted clearings. At last at nightfall I saw some smoke, and then a house. At this sight our courage and our strength returned; the pirogue was flying, for we were so happy. When landing, I insisted so much on going to bed that my companions, who wanted only food, yielded to my desire. In spite of the numerous kicks he gave me during the night, never have I found a bed so delightful as the one which I shared with an old Yankee.

We left provided with food and coasted all day, now along beautiful forests full of stags and wild turkeys, now past cliffs rising high above the river, with pine trees and red cedars growing in the cracks. The bald eagle soared above their tops; at the foot of those abrupt shores, beautiful pink and white mallows were reflected in the smooth mirror of the Osage River, beautifully shaded by wild vines.

All the settlers we saw came from the eastern states; all were well built, but in every family there were three or four people ill with incurable malarias, and the children born there showed evidence of being ill with scrofula.

The enterprising spirit of the Americans has caused them to attempt steam navigation on the Osage River and, in spite of the dangerous rapids, two boats sailed up to Osceola in the

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spring of 1840. But one of these boats ran aground 150 miles from the Missouri River; we saw its frame deep in the sand.¹⁵

We supplied ourselves with food in Warsaw.¹⁶ I was not able to see this town. Ill, lying down in the pirogue, I had not even the strength to row. Farther down, on a steep hill, rocky and planted with trees, we saw a beautiful cave, opening on a small plateau which one could reach by climbing a ladder left against the rock. This ladder, so far from the settlements, excited our curiosity, and we began to climb, helping ourselves with sassafras sticks. Our climbing was difficult; the ground was covered with rolling stones and intertwined creepers through which we had to cut our way. We found nothing but night birds in the cave.

As we approached the Missouri, the water became deeper. There was hardly any current; at times it seemed to form a sort of backwater, through which we navigated very slowly and at the price of great fatigue. The Missouri, swollen by floods in its upper tributaries, was much higher than the Osage River which flowed into it, and a common level between the two was established by the stagnation of the water of the Osage River.

Ten days had passed since we had left Colin's farm, when one evening we asked a settler on the shore for hospitality. The planter could not put us up; six of his children were sick. But he pointed out to us an abandoned cabin on the opposite shore where we might install ourselves. He told us that the Missouri River was only twelve miles from there; this news overwhelmed us with joy. Our hardships would soon be over. We found the

¹⁵ The first attempt was made in July, 1837. The next year the steamboat *Adventure* ascended 160 miles above the Missouri. The first steamboat to be employed expressly in the Osage River trade was the *Osage Packet*, operated by Benjamin B. Bryan in 1840. Consult Gerard Schultz, "Steamboat Navigation on the Osage River before the Civil War," *Missouri Historical Review*, XXIX (April, 1935), 176.

¹⁶ *Wasaw* in the original text. In 1837 Warsaw was located as the county seat of Benton County (organized January 3, 1835). For it see James H. Lay, *A Sketch of the History of Benton County*, 36-40.

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cabin almost hidden under bushes and tall thick grass, which had reconquered what agriculture had taken from them for a while. It was in rather good condition, very tight, and had a fireplace. We built a huge fire with board taken from the roof and slept in our blankets, which were dry for once.

Our longing to arrive, fatigue, and the slow current made the last twelve miles seem interminable to me. However, the scenery became enlivened by numerous clearings, steam operated wood mills, large herds of cattle, and huge flocks of shrill parrots. I paid little attention to these, as all my interest was centered in reaching my goal. About twelve o'clock, we had left the quiet clear water of the Osage for the muddy rapid water of the Missouri, as wide as a lake, and on the opposite shore of which we saw the houses of the Côte-sans-dessein.¹⁷

We tied the pirogue a mile below the junction and landed at the house of Mr. Williams.¹⁸ We waited for four days in this house for a steamboat bound for Saint Louis. Finally we got on board the steamboat *Thames*¹⁹ which brought us the next day, August 25, to the wharf of Saint Louis. James had been waiting for us for six days. He was quite afraid that something had happened to us and our long delay seemed to confirm his anxiety.

On arriving at M. Viguer's, I went to bed with an attack of pernicious malaria, and for seven days was unconscious of what happened around me. My life was saved by Dr. Trudeau²⁰ of

¹⁷ Côte sans dessein was located in Callaway County, north of the Missouri River and nearly opposite the mouth of the Osage. It was founded by Missouri French settlers in 1808 and destroyed by flood sometime after 1840. For its history, consult Ovid Bell, *Côte sans dessein, a History*.

¹⁸ This, apparently, was Asa Williams. See Bell, *Côte sans dessein*, 17.

¹⁹ According to the *Missouri Republican* (Saint Louis), for August 24 and 25, 1840, "the fine passenger boat *Thames*, Dennis master" was hourly expected in Saint Louis. On the twenty-seventh it was announced to leave town at 4 P.M. the following day.

²⁰ This man is not to be confused with Tixier's traveling companion, James de Berty Trudeau. Dr. John M. Trudeau is listed in the *Saint Louis Directory* for 1838-39 (but not in the earlier directories) as having an office at 116 N. Second Street. In 1842 he was at 102½ N. Second. He died in Saint Louis in 1853 (his administrator

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Saint Louis and thanks to his care I was able to leave on September 6 on the steamboat *Lebanon*,²¹ which took me to Cincinnati in the company of M. Guérin, who had been very sick, too.

Our two traveling companions, who enjoyed good health, went to New York by the Great Lakes, Niagara, and the Hudson. We sick people followed a quieter but as beautiful a route. We went up the Ohio [Belle-Rivière] to Pittsburgh between the rich plains of Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana and the wooded hills of Virginia and Ohio. This journey took place without any special event from Saint Louis to Cincinnati. Between the latter to Pittsburgh we ran aground on the rapids of the Ohio. The steamboat *Julia-Gratiot*,²² on which we traveled, had its paddle wheels and its engine broken, but such an accident is of such common occurrence in America that it is hardly worth mentioning.

At Pittsburgh, formerly Fort Duquesne, a French city, begins the Pennsylvania canal, which we followed up to the portage of the Alleghenies. The admirable railway of the latter brought us through the mountains to Hollidaysburg, where we resumed our trip on the canal as far as Harrisburg. During our long journeys on the water, we saw many boats, all of which bore the emblems of the political opinion of the passengers. One was surmounted by the log cabin of General Harrison, another

gave bond on September 1 of that year). According to various affidavits included in the Probate File on his estate (No. 4030), John Michael Francis Trudeau, formerly of Montreal, was the son of Michel Trudeau and Claire Aussem; he had two brothers and four sisters, none of whom lived in Saint Louis. It is probable that all of these Trudeau's were related. Cf. Tanguay, *Dictionnaire Généalogique*, VII, 374-78.

²¹ On Monday September 7, 1840, the *Lebanon* was listed under departures.

²² Probably named for Julie Gratiot (daughter of Charles Gratiot and Victoire Chouteau, wife of John P. Cabanné, born Saint Louis, 1782, and died there, 1852. She was a first cousin of Pierre Melicourt Papin and of Paul Liguest Chouteau) or for Julia Augusta Gratiot (daughter of General Charles Gratiot, the brother of Julie above, born Saint Louis, 1824, and married her cousin, Charles P. Chouteau). For these people see Billon, *Annals*, 1764-1804, 490, 473; Billon, *Annals*, 1804-1821, 173.

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bore attached to a long pole the barrel of hard cider of the conqueror of Tippecanoe; others again, on which people of various opinions were traveling, sailed under the banner of President Van Buren. On the shore, every farm, in the cities, every house, was topped by a banner on which the name of Harrison or Van Buren could be read. When two boats met, all the passengers on one came on deck to find out the political credo of those on the others. Applause or insults followed, according to whether the opinions were the same or different.

In the towns through which we passed, in Lancaster especially, we saw long processions of voters marching behind a flag on which was an inscription for or against one of the candidates for the presidency. Those men who cried and gesticulated reminded me of the *médecine du charbon*.

We went on the railroad to Philadelphia and New York, where I spent five days awaiting the departure of the *Iowa*, which sailed for Havre on September 25 and brought me home October 24, eleven months after my departure from there.



An Osage Air Notated by Tixier

Glossary

OSAGE GLOSSARY

(Pronounce *sh* like the German *ch*, *j* like the Spanish *jota*.)

<i>a-ah</i> :	arm.	<i>kibanan</i> :	runner.
<i>ankachi</i> :	no.	<i>lābeni</i> :	three.
<i>broka</i> :	half, the half of.	<i>lāgri</i> :	beautiful, pretty.
<i>caoua</i> :	horse.	<i>lāgheni</i> :	very good.
<i>caoua-houka</i> :	stallion.	<i>lapānie</i> :	scullion.
<i>caoua-hita</i> :	mule.	<i>Lénapéh</i> :	Delaware.
<i>caoua-vita</i> :	mare.	<i>lēhpouâh</i> :	chin.
<i>casséh</i> :	tomorrow.	<i>manceska</i> :	piaster.
<i>chabé</i> :	beaver.	<i>manhêh</i> :	knife.
<i>Cha-ouanon</i> :	Shawnee.	<i>manhêh-spêh</i> :	ax.
<i>chinga</i> :	small, little.	<i>manhêh-tanga</i> :	large American knife.
<i>chinhêh</i> :	to sleep.	<i>manka</i> :	black.
<i>chinka</i> :	small, little.	<i>manka-sabêh</i> :	black medicine, coffee.
<i>chinka-chinka</i> :	quite small, young child.	<i>mansêh-houêh</i> :	pick-ax.
<i>chonkêh</i> :	wolf, dog.	<i>mêhêh</i> :	sun.
<i>combéra</i> :	to sell.	<i>mikouën</i> :	spoon of horn.
<i>dêh</i> :	here, there, there is.	<i>mitchâh-dh</i> :	to scalp.
<i>diêh</i> :	you.	<i>nanihûh</i> :	tobacco.
<i>dita</i> :	yours.	<i>naniompa</i> :	pipe.
<i>eïna</i> :	mother.	<i>nhî</i> :	water, river.
<i>granlêh</i> :	large, wide.	<i>nhî-granlêh</i> :	the great water, the sea.
<i>gréhbêh</i> :	to vomit.	<i>nhî-lâtan</i> :	to drink.
<i>gréhbenan</i> :	ten.	<i>Nhi-Sudgêh</i> :	the Arkansas River.
<i>han-hai</i> :	yes (familiar).	<i>nîhr</i> :	name.
<i>houka</i> :	male.	<i>nijotsêh</i> :	gunpowder.
<i>irarêh</i> :	to see.	<i>nikâ</i> :	man.
<i>ishta</i> :	eye.	<i>nikâ-ouassa</i> :	warrior (literally, "brave man").
<i>Ishta-jêh</i> :	Frenchman (literally, "hair-up-to-the-eyes").	<i>ninkêh</i> :	nothing, none at all.
<i>jêh</i> :	hair.	<i>niskuhêh</i> :	salt.
<i>kahikêh</i> :	chief.	<i>niskurêh</i> :	salt works, saline.
<i>kanga</i> :	young boy.		
<i>Kansé</i> :	Kansa Indian.		

TIXIER'S TRAVELS

<i>Niskuréh-tanga</i> :	Grand Saline.	<i>pichéh</i> :	bad, mean, ill, thin, painful.
<i>nompa</i> :	two.	<i>pichéh-ouakau</i> :	bad woman, courtesan.
<i>norpéh-juh</i> :	leg.	<i>pompéh</i> :	foot, moccasin.
<i>oéh</i> :	good day.	<i>sabéh</i> :	medicine, witchcraft.
<i>Ouachachéh</i> :	Osage.	<i>sâni</i> :	all.
<i>ouachinka</i> :	bird.	<i>satta</i> :	six.
<i>ouagnon</i> :	to walk.	<i>ská</i> :	white.
<i>ouagheni</i> :	very large.	<i>sudgéh</i> :	jug, pot.
<i>ouagheni-lâgheni</i> :	excellent.	<i>suká</i> :	turkey.
<i>ouajota</i> :	gun.	<i>tâh</i> :	deer, stag.
<i>ouakau</i> :	woman.	<i>tanga</i> :	large, big.
<i>ouakau-vita</i> :	married woman.	<i>tanhéh</i> :	well, good, this is good enough.
<i>Oua-Kondah</i> :	The Great Spirit.	<i>tata</i> :	who, what, which one.
<i>ouakantaku</i> :	doctor, sorcerer.	<i>ta-ouan-li</i> :	robe, bison skin.
<i>ouanombréh</i> :	to eat.	<i>taupa</i> :	four.
<i>ouassa</i> :	brave (diminutive of <i>ouachachéh</i> , and <i>Os</i> , the Creole diminutive for <i>Osage</i>).	<i>tséht</i> :	cow.
<i>ouasudgéh</i> :	vermillion.	<i>tséht-houka</i> :	bison, cayac.
<i>ouéh</i> :	yes.	<i>tséht-houka-chinka</i> :	calf.
<i>ouéhlikri</i> :	forehead.	<i>tséh-tséh</i> :	tall.
<i>ouichinga</i> :	friend.	<i>tsi</i> :	hut, lodge.
<i>ouichinghéh</i> :	feminine friend.	<i>tsú-tséh</i> :	whistle.
<i>ouichinka</i> :	son.	<i>véhgri</i> :	fat.
<i>ouichinkéh</i> :	daughter.	<i>vibrivi</i> :	do you wish?
<i>oupjan</i> :	elk, moose, deer.	<i>viéh</i> :	one.
<i>pânie</i> :	enemy, Pawnee.	<i>vié</i> :	I, me.
<i>papouah</i> :	bark of sumac tree.	<i>vita</i> :	female.
<i>Patočka</i> :	Comanche.	<i>vita</i> :	mine.
<i>pedzéh</i> :	fire.		

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EDITED BY JOHN FRANCIS McDERMOTT
TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY ALBERT J. SALVAN
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